



## DUMMY RUN

Help for trainee medics on hospital ward



PAGE 6

## TENNIS JOY

Jordanne's double triumph Down Under



PAGE 40

## MP quits role over ruling on pub laws

A Black Country MP has resigned from his government role as a private parliamentary secretary over legislation to protect pubs threatened by developers.

James Morris, MP for Halesowen and Rowley Regis, refused to vote with the government and oppose a law ensuring that planning permission is needed before a pub can be demolished or converted.

Instead he resigned from his role as parliamentary private secretary to secretary to Esther McVey, minister of state for employment.

### Easier

Mr Morris said the aim of the law change was to make it easier for pubs to be protected.

He added: "At the moment, you have to go through this process of getting the pub registered as an Asset of Community Value (ACV), which offers a fair degree of legal protection for the pub, but involves a lot of bureaucracy, so we thought it would be far easier for developers to have to get planning permission which would cut the bureaucracy involved."

Mr Morris supported the The Friends of Haden Cross Inn in their successful battle against plans to build a supermarket on its Cradley Heath car park.

## Extra demand hits policing

OVERSTRETCHED police in the West Midlands are taking longer to handle non-emergencies because they are being called to cover major events elsewhere in the UK.

One recent example was the 2014 Nato summit with 453 West Midlands officers sent to Wales between August 26 and September 9. Most worked seven to 14 days in a row. It was stressed it had no impact on emergency responses.

# GEARING UP TO DEFEND WEDGE

Report by Rob Cox

**COMMUNITY leaders in Halesowen are gearing up to fight plans to build on treasured greenbelt land.**

The Coombs Wood Wedge, at the edge of the town, is cherished by locals as a place to walk and a habitat for wildlife. But the land is believed to be under threat from housing developers, with councillors saying they understand 80 homes are earmarked for the site.

St Modwen Properties is keeping tight-lipped about its plans for the land which runs alongside the Dudley Canal off Mucklow Hill. But all three Halesowen North ward councillors have agreed to fight any proposals for new homes.

## More short stay spaces to aid trade

PLANS to create 35 extra free short stay car parking spaces in Halesowen have been announced to help boost trade in the town.

Dudley Council transport bosses say the scheme will double the existing number of free short-stay on-street spaces available.

Officers said there was presently 35 short stay spaces. Under the scheme, 28 new free spaces will be created and seven existing bays will be re-designated as short stay.

The move follows discussions between Dudley Council and Halesowen Chamber of Trade last year. Traders called for more short stay 45-minute parking spaces to help boost trade.

### Exciting

Bosses said the proposed spaces would go in across the town including Great Cornbow, Summer Hill, Pool Road and Birmingham Road. Alongside new spaces in Birmingham Road, seven spaces presently designated for three-hour parking, will be re-designated as short stay.

Dudley Council cabinet member for transport, Councillor Khurshid Ahmed said: "These are exciting proposals to increase the short-stay free parking provision in Halesowen town centre."

Councillor Karen Shakespeare said she had previously fought hard against Coombs Wood Cricket Club moving onto the land, as she feared it would encourage other proposals to build there.

"The fact is that rumours of a possible development came even sooner than I had expected," she said.

"I find it extremely frustrating that there is still nothing in the public domain although it is clear that plans and options are being drawn up behind the scenes and meetings have taken place with several groups."

She added there was no need to build on greenbelt land in the area as there are two suitable brownfield locations nearby.

"There are other potential sites such as Holt Farm School, the land at the bottom of Fairfield Road and other former industrial sites where businesses have long since gone and which are desperately in need of development and would take away the blight on surrounding homes."

### Petition

Councillor Stuart Henley has launched a petition citing concerns about the impact of any development on traffic and councillor Hilary Bills has urged residents to fight "tooth and nail".

Mick Freer of the Halesowen Abbey Trust, which spent £16,000 improving the site for recreation, has written to St Modwen opposing housing on the site.

Ian Romano, senior development surveyor at St Modwen, said: "We are doing no more at this stage other than considering our options for the Halesowen area. We have received a number of approaches for different uses on the Coombs Wood Green Wedge, but remain committed to enhancing it for residents."

## Book to remember Tommy



Sisters Angela Daniels and Jill Hughes with a portrait of comedian Tommy Mundon

TWO of Black Country comedian Tommy Mundon's fans are planning a book that will also tell his life story from his humble beginnings in Halesowen.

Tommy died last year aged 80 following a long battle with Parkinson's Disease.

Retired teacher Angela Daniels, of Halesowen, and her sister Jill Hughes performed with Tommy in the 1970s in musical group Family Affair. Mrs Daniels said: "He was

a family friend. We went to his funeral and whilst we were there we realised just how many people had stories about what a great man he was, everybody had their anecdotes."

Tommy's widow Val has given her blessing. Mrs Daniels said anybody wishing to contribute to the book, to raise money for Mary Stevens Hospice, can email angelaandjill@gmail.com or call 0121 5503221.

## Closures in place to allow for EDL march

MOTORISTS and shoppers are being warned of disruption after road closures were announced in Dudley ahead of an English Defence League protest.

Police have revealed access to a number of roads will be restricted as they bid to manage crowds from the EDL and a counter anti-fascism demonstration.

EDL members are asked to gather at Rock Zombie nightclub, King Street, which will open from 10am.

They will march through the town centre and protest outside Dudley Council House, in Priory Road at 2pm. A counter UNITY rally takes place in Castle Street from 11am by the Earl of Dudley statue.

Road restrictions will operate in Castle Gate island at Castle Hill, Hall Street, Flood Street and King Street at the junction with New Mill Street.

Closures will also be in place in Dudley High Street, The Inhead at the junction with Wolverhampton Street, Ednam Road, Priory Road at the island with the Broadway and Paganel Drive.

Police say the hope to disperse the EDL protest soon after 3pm.

Anti-fascism group Dudley United Against Racism and Islamophobia criticised police for allowing Rock Zombie to open early to serve EDL members.

## Parking limit near station

PLANS to introduce a three-hour parking limit at public gardens in Cradley Heath to stop commuters leaving their cars there all day have been approved.

The car park off Sydney Road is for users of Mary Macarthur Gardens. There had been complaints that it was being used by commuters who didn't want to pay to park at the nearby rail station. Sandwell Council has approved a three-hour limit with no return within two hours.

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<b>CONTENTS</b>	
Peter Rhodes	<b>4</b>
Feature	<b>6</b>
Letters	<b>7</b>
Memory Lane	<b>16</b>
What's On	<b>24</b>
TV Guide	<b>25 - 27</b>
Brain Gym	<b>28</b>
Property	<b>29</b>
Motoring	<b>30</b>
Sport	<b>39 &amp; 40</b>

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# Cabbies furious over wait for tests

TAXI drivers say they are being forced off the road by waiting times at Dudley Council's main servicing and repairs centre, say cabbies.

The drivers want the council to have multiple sites for the tests to cut down on queues. Currently the authority only has one.

MOTs can be carried out at any garage but specific checks to ensure taxi safety must be held at the coun-

cil's own garage in Brierley Hill. The council recently moved from a single bay testing facility in Netherton to one capable of seeing two cars at once in Narrowboat Way.

But taxi drivers say there are two bays to service the 301 hackney carriages and 401 private hire taxis in the borough.

Members of Dudley Private Hire and Taxi Association say members

face lost earnings as it could take up to three days to get a test slot.

Group chairman Shaz Saleem said the waiting times were unacceptable when drivers are facing pressures on their incomes

"The wait can be up to three days for retests so drivers are off three days with no work," he said. "Other councils have more than one testing station."

Councillor Rachel Harris said: "Taxis used the council's Lister Road depot in Netherton which had one ramp, while the new facility has two.

"This is a clear improvement in the service and should reduce any waiting time but if tests are failed there is inevitably a short wait while appropriate work is carried out to ensure the car is safe."

# Boss is disappointed over level of support

**BUSINESSES** have failed to receive full backing for a scheme aiming to boost trade in Halesowen – prompting an angry reaction from the town's chamber of commerce.

Chamber of commerce chairman Wayne Edwards was seeking £6,000 of community funding to help him establish a Business Improvement District – BID – in the town.

## Funding for low-price new homes

HUNDREDS of new homes will be built in Dudley borough after Government ministers confirmed more than £6 million of funding for the scheme.

The money will go towards a total investment of £40m to create around 350 'affordable' homes over the next five years. Dudley Council successfully secured £6.2m through the Government's Local Growth Fund.

The areas which could have future housing schemes include former garage sites and the former archives building on Mount Pleasant Street in Coseley.

### Identify

The council will look to identify and develop additional sites subject to securing planning permission.

Councillor Gaye Partridge, who is responsible for housing across the borough, said: "We have a successful recent track record of new build schemes and we are pleased to have received confirmation of this funding."

"Many of the schemes we are looking to develop are relatively small but when put together we are confident they will make a big difference to local people."

But the six councillors who make-up the Halesowen North and South Community Forum had concerns about granting the full amount and instead agreed to pledge just £2,000.

BIDs are intended to deliver additional services to firms and to boost the local economy. Businesses put money into a central pot and make decisions on how the fund is spent.

Mr Edwards said: "I am disappointed. I feel the BID would offer the town huge long-term benefits and that has not been recognised.

### Savings

"Ultimately this could bring great savings to Dudley Council and be hugely beneficial to the regeneration of Halesowen.

"The money would be at the level where people know how best to spend it. At the end of the day the council simply hasn't got the resources to spend on additional schemes."

For a BID to be formed, it must win the support of the majority of firms in the proposed area in a ballot. Mr Edwards was planning to use the £6,000 to finance 'high profile' marketing to put a strong case to put to traders.

While the six ward councillors supported the principal, Councillor Karen Shakespeare said the money was being awarded on a 'speculative' basis as there was no guarantee businesses would back the proposals.

## Family tragedy inspires event



Fundraiser Gemma Warr pictured with her grandfather Henry Askins of Quarry Bank

GEMMA Warr knows more than most about the devastating effects of dementia and Alzheimer's. The illnesses have tore a destructive path through her family.

Her auntie Marion Hill died last month after a 13-year-battle with Alzheimer's, while her grandfather — Marion's father — is currently suffering from dementia.

The mother-of-two said: "He doesn't even know his daughter has died. It is heart-wrenching."

Her husband's grandmother also had

dementia. Now Gemma, aged 31, of Robin Hood Road, Quarry Bank, is determined to raise awareness. She is to host a fundraising night at The Laurels Club in Colley Gate on April 10. Black Country X Factor star Wagner is set to make an appearance.

Gemma's grandfather Henry Askins, 89, also of Quarry Bank, has been battling dementia for 18 months. Gemma divides her time between work as a job centre advisor in Halesowen and caring for Henry. Contact Gemma via [coopergemma@sky.com](mailto:coopergemma@sky.com)

# Offers on leisure activities at centre

PARENTS will be able to take advantage of activities at Halesowen Leisure Centre this half term.

The centre's pools will host the popular aqua run with inflatables and obstacles on Tuesday (February 17) and Thursday (February 19), as well as pool play mat sessions on February 16 and 20.

The sessions run at 1.15pm and 3.15pm each day and cost £4 for adults and £2.50 for under-16s.

There will also be a £7 for seven days deal, which includes access to the pool sessions as well as the squash and table tennis courts.

### Discount

Juniors under 16 also receive a 50 per cent discount.

Councillor Rachel Harris, cabinet member responsible for health, said: "Halesowen Leisure Centre is offering a number of activities to help keep children active during the February half term — so no matter what the weather is doing, there will be no need for youngsters to be bored."

For more information visit Halesowen Leisure Centre, call (01384) 812800, or go to [www.dudley.gov.uk/sport](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/sport) website.

## Tower block tales sought

A COMMUNITY project is collecting stories about life in the Black Country's tower blocks.

The Black Capital Project is receiving support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and is run by the Distinctly Black Country network.

It wants to hear from people who have lived in high-rise council housing, including those now demolished, and from those involved in planning, building or managing tower blocks.

E-mail [distinctlyblackcountry@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:distinctlyblackcountry@wolverhampton.gov.uk) or call 01902 552046.

## Forest rocker

ROCK legend Robert Plant has announced a concert on Cannock Chase this summer. The former Led Zeppelin frontman will take the stage with his new band The Sensational Space Shifters on July 11. Five thousand tickets go on sale tomorrow (Friday) at 9am.

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## Talks will precede inquiry on stabbing

THE family of tragic stab victim Christina Edkins are in talks with NHS chiefs ahead of a fresh inquiry into her death.

NHS England confirmed meetings were ongoing with the family of the 16-year-old Halesowen schoolgirl, who was stabbed by paranoid schizophrenic Phillip Simelane on a bus in Birmingham while on her way to school in March 2013.

In November it was revealed a far-reaching review will take place after an initial inquiry by Birmingham Cross City Clinical Commissioning Group said Christina's death could have been prevented. It emerged Simelane had been released from prison with no supervision only months before the attack.

The family called for the full facts and those responsible for failings to be identified.

A spokesman for NHS England said: "Meetings with Christina's family and other key partners are ongoing."

"Once we have all the information that we need, an Independent Investigation will be commissioned."

Simelane was detained indefinitely in a psychiatric hospital.

## £1.6m centre for students

FORTY extra school places will be created under plans for a new £1.6 million education centre for young people with learning difficulties.

It will be built on the site of the old Pensnett High School in Dudley.

A £1m grant has been secured towards the project, which includes demolishing former buildings on the site, including the main school building that fronts Tiled House Lane.

The centre will be created by refurbishing one of the remaining buildings and run by Pens Meadow Special School.

## Homes power cut

MORE than 1,700 homes were plunged into darkness in Halesowen.

A cable fault caused power to be lost at 6.30am on Tuesday. A total of 1,718 homes were affected. Engineers from Western Power Distribution were able to restore power by 8am.

# Father who beat cancer twice backs fund



Samuel, Matt and Bethany

A FATHER who has beaten cancer twice teamed up with his young twins to launch fundraising for World Cancer Day.

Matt Wakefield took the decision to have his sperm frozen when he was diagnosed with testicular cancer aged 20. As a result, his fiancé Corinne gave birth to twins Samuel and Bethany, now six, in 2008.

The cinema attendant thought he was in the clear until he found a lump in his other testicle last summer and was diagnosed with the disease a second time.

He teamed up with Sam and Bethany to people to purchase a Cancer Research UK 'unity band' for World Cancer Day, which was yesterday (Wednesday).

Matt, who works at Dudley Showcase Cinema, said: "I was terrified when I was diagnosed with cancer but thanks to research and treatment, I'm still here."

Matt spotted a lump on his left testicle in October 1999 but it was so small he didn't worry about it. Eight months later, after it had grown and started to ache, he went

to his GP and was referred to hospital straight away. "I don't remember much of what was said because I was in shock and thought I was going to die," said Matt.

Following surgery to remove the testicle Matt was advised to consider sperm banking before undergoing radiotherapy treatment.

"Some years later, when my fiancé Corinne and I decided we would like to have a family, I discovered it had affected my fertility. I was relieved that I had banked sperm before my treatment. We de-

cided to go ahead with IVF and were very fortunate that it worked first time. Now we have two wonderful twins who are a delight – although they keep our hands full."

Last summer Matt was leaving nothing to chance when he discovered a second lump. "Luckily I had caught it early. I had surgery to remove the testicle and then one cycle of chemotherapy, just as a precaution to mop up any stray cancer cells. The chemo was administered on the Friday and I was back at work on the Monday."

# Eight year stretch after victim stabbed in chest

A FORMER soldier's medical training may have saved the life of a man stabbed in the chest during a fracas, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

Wayne Hudson leaped into action after Lee Giles was knifed in the chest during the melee in the flat opposite his home, said Miss Raj Punia, prosecuting.

He provided emergency first aid until paramedics arrived and the judge said: "Without that intervention Mr Giles may well have died."

The court heard the victim was rushed to hospital where he was treated in intensive care for three days after being wounded by 35-year-old Philip Grainger, a tenant on another floor at the premises in Bournebrook Crescent, Halesowen.

The attacker kicked down the door of the address – which was empty at the time – and trashed it after drinking eight cans of lager, said Miss Punia.

The victim was taken to hospital with a collapsed lung and a wound at least six centimetre deep in his chest. The knife was later found on the kitchen floor.

Mr Kevin Grego, defending, said: "He was regarded as the local drunk and was subjected to verbal taunts and bullying."

Grainger pleaded guilty to wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm on July 22 last year and was jailed for eight years.

Union bosses are in discussions with staff to help them try to find new jobs. In December it was revealed 92 driver and scheduler jobs were at risk as the company tried to cope with a £700,000 cut in its budget.

The charity operates the Ring-and-Ride service across Dudley, Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Walsall, Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull. Around 22,000 people use the service, which offers door-to-door transport for people unable to use buses, trams and trains.

Unité union regional officer Caren Evans said it had been confirmed that 54 people had been made redundant, with 38 workers taking part-time roles or transferring to other roles.

## Residents feel safer thanks to lights



Let there be light – Councillor Donella Russell, left, and Sandra McHardy with fellow residents at Carol Crescent in Halesowen

THE future safety of residents in a Halesowen street is looking a lot brighter after 15 new lights were put in place in the wake of a spate of car break-ins.

New street lights have been installed in Carol Crescent, Halesowen, after four thefts from cars in the last six months.

Councillor Donella Russell urged Dudley Council to install the new lights because the existing street lamps, dating back 20 years, were too dim for the area of 100 homes.

She said: "I live about two minutes drive away but the new lights have made such a difference to the lives of people in that street because they have been able to go out a lot more."

### Community

She was pleased that the move had enhanced community spirit in the crescent.

"People have been going out and knocking on neighbours doors and it is because they feel a lot more com-

fortable doing so. They have been taking their dogs for a walk. It has just brought them together as a community. They feel safer walking into the street and talking to each other."

"They check on each other's homes when they are away. It has made them a community again and they feel safer."

She added that said she would not consider the area they live in to be at a high risk of burglary, but the residents' felt the situation had been aggravated by the poor lighting.

## Lots to see and do during holiday

ACTIVITIES will be held at museums across Dudley during half term holiday.

These include trails, craft sessions and music at Stourbridge's Red House Glass Cone, Broadfield House Glass Museum in Kingswinford and Dudley Museum in the town centre. Culture boss Councillor Hilary Bills said: "This is a really busy programme for half-term, with lots of free activities included. Parents are sure to find something to suit their youngsters."

Visit [www.dudley.gov.uk/see-and-do/museums](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/see-and-do/museums)

## Tickets on sale for a Bostin night

THE Bostin Black Country Variety Show is on February 27 at Dudley's Station Hotel to raise money for Compton Hospice.

It will be headlined by folk band The Empty Can and feature comedian Wayne Beese, Open Mic UK 2014 finalists Brett Huckfield and Marie Timmins alongside comedy singer Bob Gessey and Black Country poet Steve Bartley, from 6.30pm.

Tickets cost £12, from [www.compton-hospice.org.uk](http://www.compton-hospice.org.uk) or call 01902 774548.

## Roadworks to end on a busy route

ROADWORKS are expected to end on a major route in the Black Country today (Thursday) after causing traffic hold-ups.

South Staffs Water has been digging up part of Tipton Road, in Dudley Port, to carry out remedial works.

Temporary traffic lights have been placed in the road, causing delays towards the busy A461, but should end by today.

## Oompah & chips for the hospice

IT'S oompah time with a night of traditional German beer drinking music with a British twist.

Karl's Bavarian Brass Band will be at a beer and music night at Wilson Hall, Colley Gate, on February 28 at 7.45pm in aid of Mary Stevens Hospice. Tickets cost £14 including fish and chip supper. Call (01384) 671149.

## Rescue horse dies

A HORSE died after it was rescued from a muddy pool by firefighters.

The animal had to be put down on advice from a vet after its ordeal near Himley Road, Gornal, last week, on Monday night.

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## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



OH, spare me yet another bout of synthetic outrage. I doubt if a single black American was offended by Benedict Cumberbatch's clumsy reference on US television to "coloured" actors. While the usual self-appointed pundits see the words as evidence of some sinister thought-crime, most Yanks will accept it as an old-fashioned English guy using an old-fashioned expression. In Britain, people of a certain age or class tend to use "coloured" not because they are racists but because they still think it is the polite and acceptable term; many of them regard "black" as blunt and rude. In today's politically-correct Britain we are supposed to throw up our hands in horror at the term "coloured people" while approving "people of colour," as used by Lenny Henry. It is all deeply silly and, believe me, our grandchildren will laugh at us. In the United States, the oldest-established civil-rights movement was founded in 1909 and, despite occasional discussions, has never changed its name. It is proud to be known as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. And in 2008 the NAACP declared that the word "colored" was "outdated and antiquated but not offensive." That ought to settle things but you can't help feeling some people enjoy moving the goalposts in order to be permanently offended.

IT is a terrible tragedy that a Greek air force F16 fighter jet crashed in Spain, killing 11 people. But it is also a reminder that poor, bankrupt Greece, a country at peace since 1949, possesses no fewer than 156 F16s costing 50 million dollars each

ED Balls says Labour is not considering a deal with the SNP to form a coalition government. Or to be exact, what he actually said was: "I don't think anybody is suggesting any suggestion of a deal with the SNP at all, we're fighting hard for a majority." Lots of wriggle-room there, then. Meanwhile, what is it with Ed Balls and his eyes? At every hint that the UK economy may be in trouble, his eyes glitter with pure glee. Unseemly, or what?

A READER on pedantry. He writes: "Pedants are like little Hitlers. There ought to be fuhrer of them."

**Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star**

# Borough GCSE results best in Black Country

**DUDLEY'S education chief has expressed his delight as the borough's schools recorded the best GCSE results in the Black Country.**

Last year a total of 53.3 per cent of pupils in the borough achieved five or more A\* to C-grades, including English and maths.

The authority was ranked 114th nationally, a decrease of 22 places on 2013, although school leaders say the fall is down to changes in the way exams are recorded rather than a drop in standards.

Education boss Councillor Tim Crumpton said: "Despite a turbulent year with many changes in assessment and examinations at GCSE level, I'm delighted that Dudley schools and pupils continue to do well."

"There have been huge changes in the way GCSEs are examined this year and this has had an effect on the results of many schools up and down the country. However, it should be recognised that we have the best performing schools in the Black Country and we should celebrate the hard work of our students and teaching staff."

Oldswinford Hospital School recorded a 76 per cent pass rate for benchmark grades, while Redhill School achieved 70 per cent and Ellowes Hall Sports College and Windsor High School both at 69 per cent.

Ellowes Hall executive headteacher Andy Griffiths

**By Pete Madeley**

said: "We expect to achieve even better results this year as part of the Invictus Academy Trust. Exciting times are ahead."

At the other end of the scale two schools plummeted below the Government's minimum standard of 40 per cent. Holly Hall Academy was ranked the worst school in the borough with only 33 per cent of 146 pupils achieving the required grades, while at The Coseley School the figure was 36 per cent.

Wolverhampton Girls' High was celebrating as it now ranks as the 25th best school in the country with Wolverhampton Grammar School in 75th place.

Tables revealed 58.5 per cent of Worcestershire students achieved five or more A\*-C grades, including English and maths, above the national average of 56.6 per cent.

## Image of assault suspect



**Suspect — the man police want to talk to over an assault**

THIS man is wanted by police after an 18-year-old man was sexually assaulted in a shopping centre toilets.

The teenage victim was in a public toilet block at Cornbow shopping centre in Halesowen, when a man in his late 40s touched him inappropriately. He challenged the offender who calmly walked out of the toilets and was last seen heading towards the bus station.

West Midlands Police have now released CCTV images of a suspect in the incident that took place on November 21.

Pc Madeleine Farmer said: "The teenager did the right thing and reported the incident straight away to security staff. Officers have circulated the image of the suspect to all staff at the centre and if he tries to visit the centre again staff will alert us."

"I am appealing to anyone who recognises this man to call me or one of the team. I would also appeal to the man in the image to contact us."

Call police on 101 or anonymously by calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

## Voluntary group seek new ideas for venue

COMMUNITY groups are being urged to have their say on the future of Brierley Hill Civic Hall.

Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (DCVS) has taken over the day to day running of the venue from Dudley Council. It hopes to use its community links to bring in more shows and business to the complex.

Chief executive of DCVS, Andy Gray said he was keen to hear from as many people as possible to help them 'rejuvenate' the venue and create a 'sustainable community hub'.

### Thrive

He said: "Whether you're an interested promoter or a creative person with big ideas, if you belong to an organisation that could bring events or activities to Brierley Hill, or if you're a local resident who wants to see the Civic thrive, please get in touch."

The council says transferring day-to-day management of the venue to Dudley CVS will help the local authority save money.

It is also looking into whether community groups could also take over the management of Dudley Town Hall, Stourbridge Town Hall and the Cornbow in Halesowen along with libraries in the borough. See [www.dudleycvs.org.uk](http://www.dudleycvs.org.uk) website.

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## Sex trade man loses his court challenge

A FATHER accused of importing prostitutes from Lithuania failed in his High Court claim that if he was sent back to Lithuania for trial it would be a breach of his human rights.

Jaroslav Atraskevicius claims the conditions in Lithuanian prisons are so bad that sending him back would amount to inhuman or degrading treatment in breach of article three of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The 42-year-old also claimed that sending him back would be a breach of his rights to family life by separating him from his partner and nine-year-old daughter in Birmingham.

But two of the country's top judges, Lord Justice Aikens and Mrs Justice Nicola Davies, dismissed his appeals against the orders of District Judge Quentin Purdy that he must surrender to a European arrest warrant issued in Lithuania.

Mr Atraskevicius faces a joint enterprise offence with three others of organising the transportation of prostitutes from Lithuanian capital Vilnius to Birmingham between March 2009 and September 2011.

It is alleged that the prostitutes came by consent to work in Birmingham with the gang taking 50 per cent of their earnings.

# Hospital bosses to tackle £8m financial 'black hole'

**AN £8 million black hole has opened in the budget for Russells Hall Hospital.**

NHS body Monitor says the trust which runs Dudley's main hospital must implement a 'robust' plan to arrest its financial decline.

It follows an investigation by the regulator into deteriorating finances at the trust amid plans to axe 400 jobs over the next two years. But progress had been made at tackling A&E waiting times. It comes days after it emerged the trust was employing an interim operations director tasked with cutting A&E waiting times.

Jon Scott, whose management company is being paid between £28,000 and £36,000 a month for his services, is credited with helping the hospital be one of only a few to meet its four-hour A&E target.

Monitor said Dudley Group's finances had 'continued to worsen' and the trust is now forecasting a £8m deficit in 2014/15.

Officials say they had legally binding commitments from the trust that it will implement a 'robust strategic plan to address its financial decline'.

Dudley Group chief executive, Paula Clark, said: "We are currently beginning workforce reduction plans which will reduce our workforce by 400 posts."

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said: "The Govern-

ment has done nothing to support Russells Hall since Monitor announced their investigation half a year ago and I told the Health Secretary to give the hospital the resources it needs.

"Now our hospital is being forced to lose one in ten staff to deal with an £8m deficit this year and further cuts down the line. It's not possible to lose these jobs without an impact on care."

Meanwhile, it has been revealed that the NHS in the Black Country is sitting on more than £130 million.

Four Black Country hospitals and West Midlands Ambulance service had £134m in cash at the bank last year. Dudley Group of Hospitals ran a surplus of £351,000 and had £26m in the bank by the end of last year.

Sandwell and West Birmingham Trust made a £6,751,000 surplus with £42m in the bank.

## Former Dexys star in album giveaway



Ex-Dexys Midnight Runner Kevin Archer is giving away his lost album from the 1980s

A FOUNDING member of chart-toppers Dexys Midnight Runners is giving away copies of an album he cut in the late 1980s. Kevin 'Al' Archer, 56, said he wanted to get the work 'out there'.

The guitarist launched Dexys in 1978 with singer Kevin Rowland and played a key role in its early success. Then Mr Archer, of Cradley Heath, left the band in early 1981 forming The Blue Ox Babes. Their debut single was released in 1988 and an album titled Apples & Oranges was recorded but not released by record company Go! Discs. The album was finally issued by Cherry Red Records in 2009 but only sold 1,000 copies.

Mr Archer has purchased some of the remaining copies and is giving away 50 to people eager to hear the music.

"I have always been really proud of the album and just want to get the music out there," he said. "It is unfortunate the album has not had the exposure it could have."

Music fans can give him a call on (01384) 569990.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Tip crackdown on commercial waste

A CRACKDOWN has been launched on vans and trailers dumping commercial waste at a tip in the Black Country.

The drivers will need to apply for a permit in advance from now on, as council bosses say the sites should be mainly used by residents for household rubbish.

People using a trailer or commercial type vehicle will be unable to access the Birmingham Street facility in Stourbridge without a permit as emergency permits will no longer be handed out on site.

To apply for a permit visit [www.dudley.gov.uk/wastepermits](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/wastepermits) or call 0300 555 2345.

Permits are free and allow up to 12 visits over a 12 month period.

### Homes plan at old police base

A FORMER police station could be converted into shared accommodation under new plans.

The station in Perry Hill Road, Oldbury, closed in 2013 as part of cost-cutting measures by West Midlands Police and has since remained vacant.

In September last year Sandwell Council gave the green light to convert the two semi-detached properties into homes.

But now the same applicant, Hazhar Iqbal, is seeking permission to convert the site into shared living accommodation known as a 'house in multiple occupancy'.

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## IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews

THE ITV series *Bring Back Borstal* finished last week, with programme makers declaring it an unqualified success. Three months after filming ended, not one of the 13 miscreants who were supposedly subjected to the rigours of a 1930s borstal regime, have reoffended. And many of them ended up landing jobs.

Now look, anything which involves gobby louts being turned out of bed at the crack of dawn, being made to dress like Just William and spending their days shovelling manure is fine by me. But I do think it is stretching things branding it 'a unique social experiment'.

For a start, the bad lads had all volunteered to take part in the series, some because they wanted to turn their lives around, others probably because they thought it might make minor celebrities out of them. If White Dee can manage it, why not?

How many 1930s borstals allowed inmates to leave at any time if they didn't feel at home? And there probably aren't that many young offenders who, on their first day in custody, politely concede: 'I think I just need to grow up a bit'.

Even more ridiculous was the way the boys reacted when they were thrown out for bad behaviour, with one of them bemoaning the loss of 'a once in a lifetime opportunity'. Opportunity? What did he think it was? The Apprentices for chavs?

Watching cocky yobs being brought down a peg or two is always good television, and I'm sure that if prisons were a bit less cushy, and focused a little more on teaching the feckless about the real world, then the rewards would be great.

But a ground-breaking social experiment? Leave it out. The lads had already decided to turn their backs on crime, and their experience was so cushy that most of them were sad to leave. This wasn't a borstal. It was just a long school field trip.

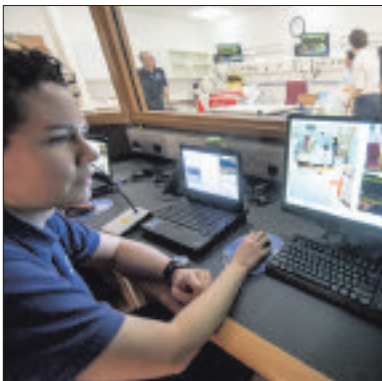
HERE is a revolutionary suggestion on how to tackle the 'crisis in the NHS'. For all the political posturing over the past few weeks, the real reason why so many people are having to wait at A&E is not because the system is in need of radical reorganisation, or even because it is short of money. It is simply because too many people are going there.

The number of patients going through the doors of accident and emergency wards has increased relentlessly over the past few years, with stories about people with toothache, constipation and bad toenails becoming the stuff of legends.

But when politicians keep blathering on about 'world class' health care, is it any wonder that some of the more intellectually challenged members of society treat A&E like a sort of spa resort for when they are feeling a bit under the weather?



One of the mannequins used by trainee medics



Kate O'Connor monitors students using the simu-



Resus training officer Bill Dainty shows techniques

# Medical students get a dummy run

Life-sized mannequins are being used at Russells Hall Hospital as a training aid. **HEATHER LARGE reports**

**LYING in hospital beds, they are as close to real patients as you can get.**

But they are in fact two life-size mannequins which mimic true illnesses and responses to treatment to help trainee nurses and doctors hone their skills.

The two-bed ward at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley has been designed to provide a realistic training room as close to real life as possible.

It is being used by under-graduate students as well as existing hospital staff to help them practise a range of situations from basic treatments to rare occurrences, such as an unusual allergic reaction.

The ward, which can also be turned into an operating theatre, has been designed to be as realistic as possible to help students and staff focus solely on the patient as if it was a real situation.

## Dribble

The mannequins have pulses, heart and lung sounds and their chests can move up and down. They can also breathe, blink, dribble and produce 'urine'.

Medical staff are able to do chest compressions and use defibrillators as they would on a real person.

There is also a live oxygen feed into the ward and medication has sensors which enable trainers to know whether the right dosage has been given. There is also a functioning anaesthetic machine.

The mannequins are fitted with speakers enabling the trainer watching in a control room to be the patient's voice.

A laptop in the control room can be



From left, Clinical Lead for Simulation Dr Nicola Calthorpe, final year Medical Students from University of Birmingham Maneka Ubhi, John Belsham, Harry Hutchins and Simulation Lead Kate O'Connor

used to control the mannequin's heart rate and blood pressure.

All simulation sessions are recorded and then played back as part of the debriefing technique, allowing trainees to see how they have performed.

The hospital also has child and baby-sized dummies.

Dr Nicky Calthorpe said: "The role of the simulation centre is to offer the learner a safe environment in which to practise and perfect their skills away from the clinical setting. We can provide the opportunity to practise man-

aging rare but significant event. We can practise complex scenarios such as managing the patient with major injuries allowing us to develop team training."

"We can use the centre to analyse critical incidents and learn from them to ensure we provide the best level of care we can to our patients."

"The centre offers probably one of the most beneficial learning opportunities throughout medical school, a very realistic but safe environment for us to learn. They say there is a no compari-

son to seeing real patients, but this is as close as it gets."

Kate O'Connor, the simulation lead in the Under-graduate Centre, said the simulation centre offered a wide range of opportunities for training and education.

"It's brilliant that we have something like this in Dudley," she said. "It's really going to have a huge impact."

The centre, officially opened by Professor Kate Thomas, Vice Dean of Birmingham Medical School, is part of the Under-graduate Teaching Academy but is used by medical students and foundation year doctors as part of their training.

## Technology

A programme for final year nursing students and student theatre staff has just been developed.

Mr Atiq-Ur Rehman, Head of Under-graduate Teaching Academy, said: "Our state-of-the-art technology will provide students and qualified staff of all disciplines real-life medical scenarios and emergency situations that they can react to and respond to with no risk to patients."

"As a Trust, we are always focused on our patient safety and this facility has great potential in helping us to train our future doctors, nurses and allied health professionals across all specialties in a safe, controlled environment."

The centre has been named the Ron Grimley Simulation Centre after the man appointed vascular and general surgeon to the Dudley Health Authority in 1983.

He had more than 40 publications to his name, and he became an examiner for the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh in 1987. His enthusiasm for teaching helped The Dudley Group achieve teaching hospital status in partnership with the University of Birmingham. The Dudley Group was first recognised as a Teaching Trust in March 2001.

## WEEK IN POLITICS

with Daniel Wainwright

ED Miliband's question and answer session in Staffordshire proved why we need the TV debates.

The Labour leader drew a crowd of around 200 members of the public to quiz him on what he'd do if he became Prime Minister.

It was a far cry from the 25,000 Sir Winston Churchill drew to Molineux in 1949 when he was leader of the opposition, although pretty impressive for a Monday lunchtime in January in an age when politicians of all parties are as popular as hedgehogs in a balloon factory.

But I have to admit, I think I was too cynical last week when I raised the prospect of the event being filled by only Labour supporters.

There were plenty of sceptics. Indeed one of the audience, from the Support Stafford Hospital campaign, walked out of the Aquarius Ballroom in Hednesford at the end vowing to never vote Labour again.

Throwing the topics open to the floor brought some interesting results, given that Mr Miliband and the organisers had no prior warning or control over them.

There was not a single question on Europe. Not one query about immigration. Not a dicky bird asked about the deficit.

## Comfortable

There were, however, questions about health, the future of Stafford Hospital in particular, support for children with special needs, the minimum wage and plenty of things that Mr Miliband was generally comfortable answering.

He was clear that there would be no false promises on Stafford Hospital. But other than an 'undertaking' to review the downgrade on 'medical' grounds rather than 'penny pinching', there was not enough to prevent the aforementioned member of the support campaign from vowing that members would stand in council wards in May.

I wonder what David Cameron would say if he faced the same questions. The parties are not showing their differences on the same issues but fighting on vastly different issues.

For UKIP it's all about immigration and Europe. For the Tories it's all about the economy and for Labour it's a game of 'whose recovery is this anyway' and suggesting that those at the top are still the ones benefiting at the expense of everyone else.

At Prime Minister's Questions Mr Miliband and Mr Cameron will argue but on totally separate points. I really hope the TV debates go ahead, particularly the head-to-head between the two men vying to be Prime Minister. At least then they'd have to take the same questions and be judged accordingly. Until then we'll have to cope with each party trying to set the agenda with their own spin machine.

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# Others will gain from university's loss

REGARDING Dr Carl Chinn's university post being terminated. The man has been a major influence of my life since meeting him several years ago, and whether someone fills the post or not, they will find it hard to stand in his shoes.

Those who will suffer from the university's action are all those students who worked or would have worked under him.

I only have to listen to a revamped BBC Radio WM to be sure the hole left by Carl's show being axed will be similar to the one left at his university.

From the first time I appeared on his show talking about my first book Chant of the Mutha Tung, Carl has been someone I have held with great respect. He has supported me through all my ventures and his encouragement has given me confidence to publish, record, organise events and carry out talks which grow and grow through his encouragement.

For over a year I have hosted a radio programme The Omma n Chain that is modelled on his WM programme, platforming all that is local in the Black Country and Brum.

Academically it was Carl who encouraged me to complete my doctorate.

I know there will be no shortage to the amount of projects he will devote his time to and they will all be approached with the boundless energy he gives to the region and its people every day of his life, regardless of any other obstacles that come his way.

The university's loss will be others' gain, that I am sure of.

**DR B DAKIN**  
**aka Billy Spake Mon**  
**Tividale**

## Passengers left in cold on buses

I RECENTLY travelled on the 4H bus from the Saddlers bus station at Walsall to Halesowen, a one hour journey. There was no heating on the bus. By the time I reached Blackheath I was unable to continue as I could not feel my feet and had to stamp them to get the feeling back.

This is not an isolated case. This is happening all the time and as the temperature is hardly above freezing even at midday why is there no heating on the buses?

Yet in the heat of summer the heaters are on full blast. Why is that? Does an Australian run things these days? I know it is summer in Australia but this is the UK and mid-winter, perhaps someone should tell him.

Is this some newfangled way to get the pensioners to exercise, stamp your feet, clap your hands? What a joke but once again it's the long suffering passengers who have to put up with it.

**M LLOYD**  
**Wednesbury**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### POST

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

### E-MAIL

Dudley.chrons@  
expressandstar.co.uk

## Children's transport cuts is 'a new low'

TO see Dudley Labour Council proposing to cut free transport for children with special needs is, in my view, immoral.

The root cause is the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Government's cuts.

If carried through, this is an uncaring, compassionless act.

Some MPs, such as my own, Conservative MP Mr James Morris, claim that they oppose certain cuts in their constituency.

To attack vulnerable special needs children and their families is a new low but one in which all three main parties are quite prepared, it seems, to carry through.

Councillor Crumpton, like James Morris MP, tells us he is really opposed to such cuts, but unfortunately there is no choice. Really? There is always a choice.

If in his heart and soul he is opposed to cutting free transport for special needs children, he could take a principled step and resign.

Politicians are always claiming there's no money in the pot. Just what they would love us to believe!

**C STOLL**  
**Halesowen**

## DNA test deterrent to dog mess

NUMEROUS readers write letters to newspapers about dog mess and often councils say there's a problem.

I agree dog mess is disgusting and a health hazard.

There is a solution. BBC Ceefax Wales news stated a US firm (Poo Paws) have technology to extract DNA from dog mess to prove who the owner is.

Let's hope all councils show interest in it, that way it's a deterrent.

Councils would have DNA proof to take the guilty to court.

I believe fewer owners would risk it, and those who did, even those whose dogs are off the lead and can say 'It's not mine', would be identified.

Then, innocent dog owners who do pick up the mess, as I always pick up the mess from my two dogs, can be protected from the moaners who wrongly accuse them.

**J ADAMS**  
**Rowley Regis**

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# 8 Old school building is facing demolition

A SCHOOLHOUSE, first built nearly 60 years ago, will be reduced to rubble as part of a £9 million refurbishment.

Orniston Sandwell Community Academy, on Lower City Road, Oldbury, is part-way through the project.

Emotional staff and students gathered to watch as diggers tore down the final walls of the structure on Monday. It was first erected in 1956.

The building will be replaced with a landscaped area and more space for students to unwind. A new teaching block with more than 20 classrooms was completed in September last year.

Principal Marie McMahon said: "Although we feel a tinge of sadness at a part of our history going, we are delighted with our new facilities. Students, staff and the wider community finally have the superb site they deserve."

The whole project is expected to be completed by Easter, making it almost two years since the work started in early July 2013.

Finance director Sue Bowron said many staff and pupils were positive about the school's future.

She said: "The building had been there for more than 60 years.

"Many teachers were once students here so it has a special place in their hearts.

"Everybody is so pleased with the new building, though."

# Tributes after death of football club stalwart

A FOOTBALL club has paid tribute to a former director who has died aged 57.

Fans and staff are mourning the loss of Phil Lloyd who worked at Halesowen Town as both groundsman and club steward before taking on the role of director.

Mr Lloyd, of Lyde Green, Cradley, joined the committee in 1980. He died at Russells Hall Hospital on Monday.

Former club chairman, Ron Moseley, spoke about the contributions Mr Lloyd made to the club over the years. He said: "During my time as chairman at the club Phil was an important part of the 12 person board. "Cast your eyes around the Grove and it will be difficult to find any project that he was not involved in."

## Committed

"Phil was one of those people you could depend on, when the going was tough he was always at your side."

"You only had to ask and he, like the other members of the board during that time, would be there totally committed to the club's on-going success."

Mr Lloyd, who became a director in the early 90s, was heavily involved with the club up until he retired from his role around 2004.

Mr Moseley said: "Phil has been missed over these last few years and will continue to be missed, but those of us who knew him well will find many telling reminders and memories of a dedicated director and friend of the club."

By Charlie Benton

of a dedicated director and friend of the club."

Outside of football, Mr Lloyd also worked at Dudley Council and as a contractor at schools around the area.

After the grounds were flooded in 1986, Mr Lloyd was instrumental in repairing it within the season to allow the club to continue to play.

"He dedicated a great part of his life to this club and his memories will live on within the stadium he helped to create," said Mr Moseley.

Mr Lloyd also helped the supporters' club bounce back after a devastating fire in 1996 caused an estimated £150,000 of damage.

Neighbouring football clubs have been sending the club messages of support since Yeltz officials announced the news. Stourbridge FC tweeted: "Condolences from all at Stourbridge. NL football can't survive without the unsung few like Phil. They're hard to replace."

## G'day as twins meet up Down Under



Twin brothers Richard and Brendan Oakley are reunited in Australia after being chosen in the Big Aussie Reunion

IT was a big reunion Down Under for twin brothers from Dudley after one of them won a competition for a huge family reunion.

Big smiles greeted Brendan Oakley as he stepped off the plane in Australia to be reunited with his twin brother Richard. The pair had only seen each other since 2006 ahead of their emotional meeting.

Brendan was one of the winners of The Big Aussie Reunion competition by Tourism and Events Queensland and Flight Centre UK.

After sifting through thousands of entries the team, Brendan was one of those lucky enough to get to jet across the world.

In all 80 friends and family were flown into Queensland's Gold Coast so that they could enjoy a week-long holiday with their loved ones, celebrating Australia Day in style. The brothers, both aged 48, had been apart since Richard moved to Australia in October 2006. He moved with his family just after their 40th Birthday party at the Queen Mary Ballroom, at Dudley Zoo.

"There is simply nothing like being able to sit down and talk with my best buddy and soul mate," Richard said.

Richard lived with his wife Nicola and daughters Jenny, 18, and Sarah, 16, in Tivdale with the girls attending Tivdale Hall Primary School, before the move. Back in the Black Country, Brendan works for Wolverhampton Construction Company AM Griffiths & Son Ltd. He is married to Jayne and has two children, Elizabeth, 17, and Christopher, 15, and they live in Sledmore Road.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Mortgages rise 7pc for society

A BUILDING society has announced that mortgage completions were up seven per cent in 2014.

The combined value of mortgages taken out by members of the Tipton and Coseley Building Society was more than £50m.

Chief executive Richard Newton said: "We are pleased that our mortgage business achieved such upbeat figures last year in what was and remains a very competitive market and I hope these results set the scene for 2015 and beyond."

"We want to help as many people buy their first or subsequent home and this is behind our recent decision to make 95 per cent lending available to both first time buyers and home movers."

### Countdown to city pub's return

A CANALSIDE pub that is being refurbished will be open to the public later this month creating 30 jobs.

The Fiddle and Bone in Birmingham city centre closed down more than a decade ago and is situated behind the Grade II\* listed Roundhouse near Brindleyplace.

But now the venue, off Sheepcote Street, will enjoy a new lease of life thanks to a partnership between the building's owners, the Canal & River Trust, and Sherborne Wharf. It is set to open on February 28.

The development will include a revamp of the Roundhouse, constructed in 1873 as stables.

Four bars will be created with a seating area overlooking the canal.

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# Bravery awards after bank robber is jailed



Sergeant Craig Rolinson, West Midlands Police Chief Constable Chris Sims, Craig Common and Sergeant James Lewis

**A COURAGEOUS** Coseley man who foiled a bank robber's escape has received a Good Citizen's Award.

Craig Common chased raider Gregory Dike after seeing him hold a hunting knife to the neck of a customer in the NatWest branch in High Street, Blackheath, on April 17. The 37-year-old prevented Dike fleeing by taxi.

On Friday Dike, of Harlesden, London, was jailed for 11 years after admitting four bank robberies across the country. Detective Constable Darren Brown, who led the investigation, said:

"At one stage Dike turned to threaten Craig with the knife but he was determined to keep tabs on him."

The bravery of two West Midlands Police officers has also been recognised. Sergeants Craig Rolinson and James Lewis wrestled Dike to the ground. Both officers were awarded Chief Constable's Commendations, the force's highest honour.

Dike had tried car-jacking motorists, pulling a pensioner from his vehicle. The 39-year-old had read books on bank robberies before launching the one-man crimewave following a previously 'blameless' life.



Jailed — bank robber Gregory Dike

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### Creative festival at the Hollybush

ARTISTIC talent will be showcased at a day-long festival in Cradley Heath. The Locked In event on March 14 features musicians, actors, comedians, poets, film makers, dancers, photographers, craftspeople and artists.

The day at the Hollybush pub in Newtown Lane is hosted by Cradley Heath Creative. Highlights include the film, Chains, Dogs and CHAOS by Sara Tibbetts, in which she discovers her Cradley Heath roots. There is also a Mayhem Theatre production and a workshop to make a collective sculpture with Tim Tolkien.

For more information or to register your interest call 07952563725 or visit the Facebook page Cradley Heath Creative.

### Library events for all the family

POETRY readings, music and craft are all lined up to celebrate national Libraries Day in one Black Country borough.

Staff at Sandwell's libraries have organised free family fun to mark the day on Saturday.

Brandhall Community Choir will fill the shelves with the sound of music when they perform at Brandhall Library from 1pm while at Smethwick Library there's a loom band making from 2pm.

Children and their families can party at a Peppa Pig-themed event on Saturday at Oakham Library from 11am.

Councillor Mahboob Hussain said: "Our libraries offer much more than simply lending books."

# Health could be 'put at risk' by bus emissions

**AGEING buses churning out harmful nitrogen oxide gases could be endangering the health of residents and pedestrians in a busy Black Country street.**

Steve Eling, deputy leader of Sandwell Council, said a pollution survey was conducted on the council's behalf in Bearwood Road, between Bearwood and Smethwick. He said it revealed that although buses comprised only six per cent of the traffic, they contributed 57 per cent of the pollution.

These fumes included nitrogen oxide, which can cause swelling of throat tissues in the upper respiratory tract and CO2, which damages the environment.

Councillor Eling believed the problem was caused by older buses run by operator National Express West Midlands which needed replacing with newer models and he has called on the operator to carry out the change.

He said the firm was still using Euro 4 classification buses, which are 10 years old, while he believed some 30 per cent of the buses using Bearwood Road were 15 years old and did not meet emissions targets.

He wanted to see more Euro 6 buses, which came into service on September 14, using the number 11 route which covers Stechford, Yardley, Perry Barr, Harborne and Bearwood.

"We are not looking to say 'we don't want buses going through there,' but we can't tolerate this level of pollution," he said. "The general argument is to get people to use public transport because it reduces pollution, but what we are seeing here is that it is the buses that are pumping out the fumes."

By Dominic Bareham

The traffic pollution survey was conducted in November on behalf of the council using equipment that was not just able to monitor what was coming out of exhausts but also used Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology to pinpoint specific vehicles causing the pollution. Councillor Eling said many of these were buses.

He would like to make Bearwood Road a low emission zone, which could result in the vehicles responsible for most pollution being banned.

National Express spokesman Jack Kelly said: "We have yet to see any details of this report but will study them closely when they are available to us. This year we are investing record amounts on new buses."

## Campaigners reassured over pubs



The Haden Cross pub on Halesowen Road, Cradley Heath, which campaigners are planning to protect

PUBS listed as community assets will not be demolished or changed to other uses without prior planning permission, campaigners have been told.

Hundreds signed a petition opposing New River Retail's £1 million plan for the Co-Operative store next to the Haden Cross Inn in Halesowen Road, Cradley Heath.

Sandwell Council, which rejected the plans, is considering using the Localism Act to get the pub listed as an 'asset of community value'. If a building or land is listed as an ACV then it

allows the community to put together a bid to buy it should it go on sale.

But the proposed changes mean an ACV-listed pub will lose its rights to be demolished or have its use changed without a planning application. This move gives fresh hope to those trying to save the Seven Stars in Sedgley.

There were concerns such a listing might leave a council open to a compensation demand - fears allayed by Communities Minister Stephen Williams in Parliament. Under the listing, the pub has to be offered to the

community if put up for sale. Mr Williams said: "The Localism Act makes it clear that if 21 people come forward and say 'this is an asset of community value to us', the local authority should list it unless the criteria set out in the Act apply."

Councillor Anne Shackleton, who has been campaigning for the Haden Cross, said: "We certainly have a lot more than the 21 signatures required so this is a positive step. New River has assured us that the Haden Cross Inn will remain a pub."

## Taking a Shine to show for charities

A VARIETY night of music and drama featuring acts from across the area will be staged next month.

The event, called Shine, will feature people with learning disabilities and include dance, music and poetry renditions.

It will be held at Brierley Hill Civic Hall, in Bank Street, on February 24 from 7pm. Doors open from 6.15pm.

Groups including Dance Unity, the Side by Side Theatre Company and Kaleidoscope Theatre Group will also perform.

The event will raise cash for the Mayor of Dudley's charities.

### Thank

Mayor Councillor Margaret Aston said: "I would like to thank all of the groups and volunteers who are helping with the evening. I am looking forward to a show that people of all ages will be able to enjoy."

"As spaces are limited I would urge people to book their tickets well in advance, as Shine sold out when it took place in 2013."

Tickets cost £5 and are available by calling (01844) 812812 or visiting Dudley Council Plus in Castle Street, Dudley.

Tickets can also be purchased online at the [www.dudley.gov.uk/entertainment](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/entertainment) website.

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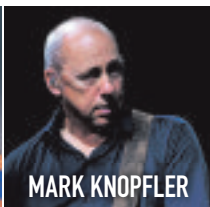


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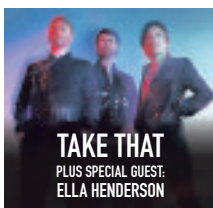
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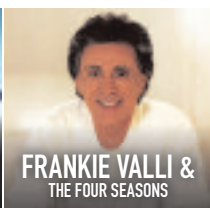


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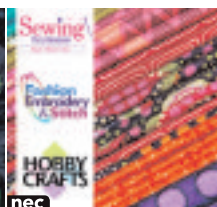
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## Homes on show at Hagley project



Wychbury Fields sales team Steve Rush, Rachel Slater and Robert Monkman outside the show homes at Hagley

LUXURY show homes have been unveiled at a controversial housing development in Hagley. Three detached properties can be viewed at the 175-home scheme near the A456 Kidderminster Road roundabout.

The project, named Wychbury Fields by developer Cala Homes, has been criticised by some villagers concerned it will worsen traffic problems and put pressure on facilities. Work at the site began in July last year and Cala Homes

said the first phase of homes had 'flown out the door'. Robert Monkman, sales and marketing director, described it as a flagship development, designed around a 'village green' concept. Prices start from £399,950.

The developer will contribute £800,000 towards education in the area and £85,000 towards improvements at Hagley Surgery to help both cope with more residents, while £1 million was spent on the Kidderminster Road roundabout.

## Stop and search is online

**THE public can now go online and see exactly where police stop and searches have taken place and what the outcome is.**

West Midlands Police is one of 14 forces across the country to launch the online scheme.

It is hoped it will help reduce the overall use of stop and search.

Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner Councillor Yvonne Mosquito said: "In the West Midlands we are

proud to have pioneered many of the initiatives that later became part of the national Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme. We have lead the way on this important issue.

"It is crucial that the public continue to have high levels of confidence in the police and this publication is an important way of achieving that. This is a step in the right direction towards greater transparency and accountability."

The Home Office committed last year to using geo-mapping technology to make stop and search more

transparent than ever before, to bring greater accountability to how forces are using the power.

Home Secretary Theresa May said: "This scheme is a significant step forward in the Government's commitment to increasing transparency and is the first time stop and search data has been presented in this way."

"This Government's reforms to make stop and search more intelligence-led and accountable are working and the number of stop and searches has fallen by a quarter since I became Home Secretary."

## Sikhs in call for answers from MPs

A SIKH group is targeting 50 constituencies, including Dudley North, with their own manifesto.

The Sikh Federation said it wanted to use the 'voting clout' of the community to secure an investigation into the massacre at the Golden Temple in Amritsar in 1984, among other issues.

The manifesto was developed after thousands of people attended the 2014 National Sikh Convention at the Guru Nanak Gurdwara in Wolverhampton.

The organisation is calling for candidates in each of the constituencies to set out their position, and those of their party, on the issues.

Tens of thousands of Sikhs marched in London last year to commemorate the storming of the temple at Amritsar, the most sacred site of the Sikh religion, when the Indian Army clashed with a Sikh faction that had occupied the temple. The incident resulted in hundreds of deaths.

The manifesto calls for an independent inquiry into alleged UK Government involvement, after the revelation that an SAS officer had advised the Indian Government ahead of the attack, called Operation Bluestar.

Four months after she ordered the operation, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her two Sikh bodyguards.

Bhai Amrik Singh, Sikh Federation chairman, said: "We are making the most of our voting clout."

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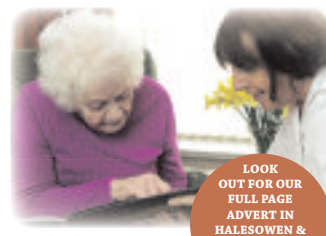
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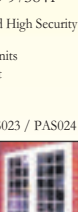
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## Injured had to be cut out of car

TWO injured men had to be cut from a badly damaged Ford Fiesta after a two car crash near Cosleay.

The Fiesta was in collision with an Audi A3 on Birmingham New Road between its junctions with Spring Road and the Black Country Route.

The out of Wolverhampton carriageway was blocked for over an hour as fire crews, paramedics and police dealt with the incident that occurred around 7pm last Friday.

### Shocked

Firefighters from Bilston, Merridale Street and Dudley stations removed the side of Fiesta to rescue the two male occupants, one of whom was feared to be badly hurt.

The woman in the Audi was shocked but was believed to have only minor injuries.

All three people were attended by paramedics and taken to hospital for further assessment.

# 2,000 jobs a year needed in West Midlands construction

**A BOOM in construction is set to create more than 2,000 new jobs a year in the West Midlands between now and 2019, according to a report.**

They are part of an estimated 224,000 new jobs that will be created nationwide over the next five years, says the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB).

The estimate of more than 40,000 new jobs needed every year is 8,000 more than previously predicted.

According to the report, private housing is set to increase by 4.6 per cent over the next few years, while employment is expected to be particularly strong in Wales and northern England.

In the West Midlands the CITB is predicting 2,320 jobs a year will be created, boosted by projects such as the £500 million redevelopment of Birmingham city centre.

Every year, on average, the industry across the region will need to recruit 340 electricians, 230 bricklayers, 770 workers in carpentry and interior fit-out, 220 specialists in 'building envelopes' such as roofing and cladding and around 200 construction process managers.

### Jaguar

But construction industry growth in the West Midlands, at 2.1 per cent a year, is below the expected rate for the UK as a whole, 2.9 per cent.

"While house and commercial work is expected to grow, the CITB is predicting a drop-

off in industrial work over the five years once Jaguar Land Rover's engine factory in Wolverhampton is completed. Infrastructure work such as road and rail projects is unlikely to see any major growth before 2019.

Steve Radley, the CITB's director of policy, said: "Our forecast shows that construction is experiencing a major comeback, with a sustained period of growth set to make a positive impact on the wider economy. Leisure, infrastructure and housing are all driving growth, but this brings with it new challenges in meeting skills demand. "Government can help employers to develop the next generation of workers by sending out a clear signal that it will make it as simple as possible for companies of all sizes to invest in apprenticeships."

## Last chance to reward heroes

TIME is running out for residents to nominate unsung community heroes for a top civic award.

Nominations have already been made for sporting stars, tenants and resident group leaders from the Dudley borough for this year's Mayor's Civic Awards.

There are six categories, named after borough greats, and include the Duncan Edwards award for sport, Cedric Hardwicke award for arts, Frank Foley award for community spirit, Thomas Attwood award for education, Mike Holder award for business and the William Shenstone award for the environment.

Residents can nominate someone online at [www.dudley.gov.uk/civicaawards](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/civicaawards) or call 01384 817449 for a form.

Completed forms should be sent in by February 9.

## Vintage road roller makes return home



Museum engineer Jim Pease gives old Nelly a spin

A STEAMROLLER used for levelling the Black Country's roads a century ago has returned home.

The six-ton road roller has been loaned to the Black Country Living Museum by owner Carol Colvin, who lives in Northamptonshire.

Following the death of her husband Douglas - who affectionately named it 'Nelly' - she decided a loan to the museum in Dudley was what he would have wanted.

"It was his pride and joy," she said. "My husband always had a passion for steam, and when he saw it he fell in love. We spent many hours talking over whether to buy it. We couldn't come to a decision, so in the end we flipped a coin and that was it."

"When he passed we used the chimney to spread the ashes near where we lived, as that is something we had often joked about."

The steamroller dates back to 1911 and was once the property of Tipton Council. The now defunct authority purchased it with a £438 bank loan, around £50,000 in today's money. It can reach a speed of up to four miles-per-hour.

## Police are to reveal blueprint for future

THE blueprint for the future of West Midlands Police will be unveiled next month.

The force will release the initial results of its partnership with Accenture, launched in August last year in a performance related five year deal that could see the consultancy firm paid £25 million.

The first link up with the private sector in its 40 year history is aimed at finding new ways of saving money without compromising the fight against crime. It is intended to make better use of data and technology while also reducing costs.

A report to the force's Strategic Policing and Crime Board meeting this week, chaired by Crime Commissioner David Jamieson, reveals that the blueprint will be presented in March. The report concluded: "The detailed cases for change will be made and documented before any funding is committed."

winter

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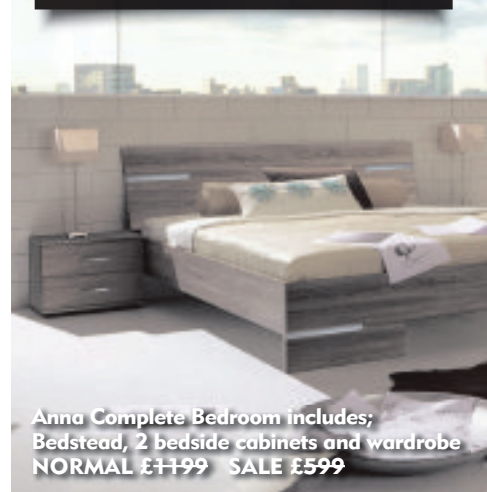
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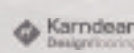


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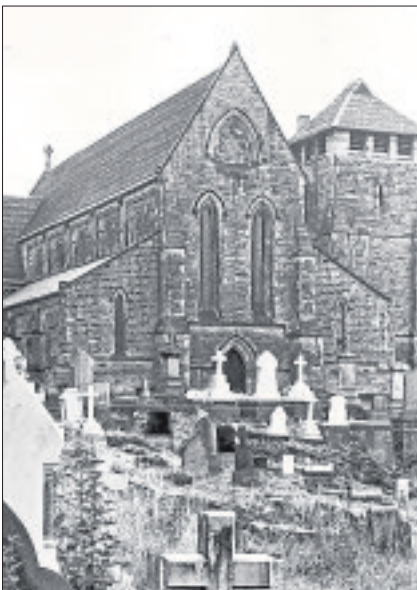
The Spartans – Barry Hill, Mel Gorrod, John Shipley, Graham Jebb and Micky Dunn



John Shipley at the Royal Victoria Hotel, in Newport



A relief on the Sister Dora statue in Walsall depicting her comforting families in 1872



Pensnett Church where many paid their respects in

# Fear of disasters which haunted families of miners across region

**DISASTER:** it was a word that was forever in the minds of all those who lived in a mining community in Walsall.

Residents feared a sudden accident in the local colliery that would swiftly wreak death and destruction and bring enduring sorrow and travails.

And as in other mining regions, the Black Country too suffered from disasters – as was made plain on November 14, 1872 at the Pelsall Heath Colliery. Disaster struck when water had accumulated in the old workings of an adjacent abandoned mine and had broken through to where 50 men had been lowered down to work at 6am.

Fortunately, three hours later, 20 of them had come back up for breakfast.

Soon after, as the water rushed in and flooded the tunnels below, these lucky miners heard an alarming cry from the bottom of the 60ft shaft. "Lower the cage or we shall all be drowned!" was the call. Colliers nearest to the shaft were able to

## MEMORY LANE

Report by Carl Chinn

save themselves. One man in particular had a remarkable escape. Clinging to a ladder, he was carried along underground for a quarter of a mile by the rush of water and 'when dragged up by his fellows, he was insensible'.

But by nightfall, 22 men remained entombed. As soon as was possible, the colliery's management swiftly set up pumping apparatus. Unhappily, although 850 tons of water per minute could be pumped out, the flow was so rapid that by late Thursday night the level of water had reached almost 11 yards. It did not start to drop until well into the Friday. Throughout Thursday and Friday, the womenfolk of the trapped miners gathered at the pit head. Shawls pulled over their heads and wrapped around their shoulders, they sat in patient sorrow. Among those who had escaped was Joseph Cash. He

had been sitting on Jiggers Hill eating his breakfast when 'Squash', George Jeffreys, had come running to him, shouting "Run for your life!" The water was close after him and both boys fled with all their speed down the hill to the bottom of the shaft. Unhappily their father and another brother were among the 22 men who had not escaped. Sadly they all died.

Sister Dora, the Anglican nun and nurse who has become an iconic figure in Walsall, headed for Pelsall to comfort the families and to distribute blankets and food.

Just over 50 years later, on April 21, 1923, 57 miners working in the Dandy Mine in Pensnett were also overwhelmed by disaster. At about midday, there was a terrific flood of water and the colliers ran as fast as they could to escape. Five men were missing. Two days later, the rescuers found Enoch Cadman alive, sitting on a ventilation passage on the way to the thick coal.

Unhappily, the four other men were found dead lower down. Thousands turned out to pay their respects when the men

were buried in Wordsley Parish Church and Pensnett Parish Church. Local, regional and national support was even more marked following the dreadful Aberfan Disaster of October 21, 1966. That day, and after several days of heavy rain, a mass of waterlogged mining debris in a slag heap slid down the mountain above the South Wales village near Merthyr Tydfil.

Within five minutes this frightful avalanche engulfed a farm, some terraced cottages and Pantglas Junior School, where pupils were just beginning their first lessons. The effect was terrible: 116 children and 28 adults were killed. Quickly an Aberfan Disaster Memorial Fund was set up with 90,000 contributions made, totalling £1,606,929. One benefit event involved John Shipley and the Spartans. Now better known as an author of football histories and Westerns, John was then lead guitarist and vocalist. He recalls: "On Saturday, November 2, 1966, more than one-thousand rock and roll fans crammed into Walsall Town Hall to support a charity event."

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Students need to have prior knowledge or have attended the previous course

Mon 23 Feb. 09.30-11.30. 5 wks £45.00#

### ITALIAN: BEGINNERS

Mon 23 Feb. 12.00-14.00. 5 wks. £32.50#

### GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR ANDROID SMARTPHONE:

Mon 23 Feb. 12.00-14.00 5 wks. £45.00#

### AN INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY HISTORY

Mon 23 Feb. 14.30-16.30 5 wks. £45.00#

### ARABIC

Mon 23 Feb. 17.00-18.30. 5 wks. £26.25#

### FOLK ART

Mon 23 Feb. 19.00-21.00 3 wks. £27.00#

### CREATIVE WRITING

Mon 23 Feb. 19.00-21.00. 5 wks. £35.00#

### MASTERING YOUR ANDROID TABLET

Mon 23 Feb. 19.00-21.00 5 wks. £45.00#

### COMPUTING SKILLS: INTERNET

#### AND E-MAIL

Tues 24 Feb. 14.30-16.30 3 wks. £27.00#  
or Tues 24 Feb. 19.00-21.00 3 wks. £27.00#

### HAIRDRESSING FOR BEGINNERS

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### FACE PAINTING & GLITTER TATTOOS

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(Concession price £13.75)

## NEW CLASSES STARTING IN MARCH

### HOW TO ALTER CLOTHES TO FIT

Fri 27 Feb. 09.30-12.30 3 hrs £20.00

### WIRE WRAPPED JEWELLERY MAKING

Tues 3 Mar. 12.00-14.00 3 wks. £27.00#

### HOW TO USE A SEWING MACHINE

Beg: Tues 3 Mar. 09.30-11.30. 3 wks. £27.00#

### CANAL ART—IMPROVERS

Tues 3 Mar. 12.00-14.00 3 wks £27.00#

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Wed 25 Feb. 18.30-19.30. 5 wks. £17.50  
Thurs 26 Feb. 19.05-20.05. 5 wks. £17.50  
Thurs 26 Feb. 20.10-21.10. 5 wks. £17.50

### FITNESS YOGA

Tues 24 Feb. 20.05-21.05. 5 wks. £17.50

### FRENCH LANGUAGE

Please note that this course teaches you to write and converse in French and includes tuition in grammar

Improvers: Tues. 24 Feb. 19.00-21.00. 5 wks. £32.50#  
Inters: Mon. 23 Feb. 19.00-21.00. 5 wks. £32.50#  
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Wed 25 Feb. 12.00-14.00. 5 wks. £35.50#

### PATCHWORK - Improvers

Mon 23 Feb. 19.00-21.00 5 wks. £35.50#  
Wed 14 Jan. 14.30-16.30 5 wks. £35.50#

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**ADULT SWIMMING:** Mon. 12.30-13.15, Tues. 19.00-20.00, Thurs. 19.00-20.00. All £3.00

**AQUAFIT:** Wed. 12.30-13.15, Fri. 12.30-13.15. £3.00.  
Wed. 19.00-20.00, Sun. 9.00-10.00. £4.00

**FITNESS SWIM:** Mon. 18.00-18.45. £3.00  
for 10-19 yrs olds

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E-mail: l4lcommunitygroup@hotmail.co.uk

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Ages 6-10

Mon 16 Mar. 15.45-17.15. 1.5hrs. £5.00

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Mon 15 Jun. 09.00-12.00 3 hrs. £19.20

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Tues 27 Apr. 09.00-16.00 1 day. £38.40

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Fri 8 May. 09.00-13.00 1/2 day. £25.60

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## Axed bus route partly restored

NEW bus routes have launched for passengers in Old Hill and Cradley, including one restoring part of a service controversially axed by transport bosses.

They will take passengers to Merry Hill shopping centre, Halesowen town centre and Blackheath.

One of the four new routes replaces part of the old 297 service, travelling through Station Road and Barrs Road.

The 297, which ran via Quarry Bank to Russells Hall Hospital, was stopped by National Express West Midlands in the summer.

A campaign has been launched to restore the full service, which ran through Old Hill, Cradley Heath and Quarry Bank to Russells Hall Hospital. Both National Express and Centro have been in talks with councillors.

## Medal is icing on the fish cake



Cake artist and ex-lorry driver Glen Beardsmore, of Quinton, won gold with his 'fish cake'

IT'S a fish cake, Jim, but not as we know it. Believe it or not, this lifelike brown trout is made entirely of vanilla sponge and icing.

The incredible creation is the handiwork of former HGVDriver-turned-baker Glen Beardsmore, who has just won gold in the sculpted novelty cake category at the prestigious Cake International.

"Some people were convinced it was a real fish, so that has to be a good sign," said Glen, aged 53, of White Road, Quinton.

"I originally designed it to be a brown trout but it ended up looking more like a salmon. I am a keen fisherman and have caught plenty of brown trout over the years so it made sense to do it.

"There has been a real positive reaction to the cake. After it was displayed at the competition and I made it back home I had to do some repairs because people couldn't

## Orchestra funds to the tune of £200,000

A WORLD famous orchestra has been given a £200,000 funding boost which will secure the future of one of its programmes of events.

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra has received the cash in a donation from board member John Osborn. It will be matched by the Arts Council.

Bosses say the donation will secure the future of the orchestra's chamber music programme, which showcases the individual talents of the world-class orchestra's players through performances by small groups of musicians.

The CBSO's public funding has been reduced by 24 per cent since 2010 so it relies on donations.

Mr Osborn, a long-term supporter, has served on the organisation's board since 2012 and on the CBSO Development Trust since 2013.

CBSO director of development Simon Fairclough said: "This is wonderful news for the orchestra."

# Bogus workmen sought after cash taken from pensioners

**MORE than a dozen pensioners have been targeted by thieves posing as workmen who fraudulently claim the householders need emergency repairs.**

A total of 17 elderly people in Dudley, Wolverhampton, Sandwell and Walsall have been victims to the conmen since the start of the year.

Police say the bogus workmen knock on pensioners' doors offering them garden or building work. In some cases, elderly people have handed

over hundreds of pounds, with the thieves never returning to carry out the work.

The conmen have also talked their way into homes and taken cash from behind their victims' backs.

### Unreported

Officers said since the beginning of the year, seven offences had been reported in Dudley, five in Sandwell, three in Wolverhampton and two in Walsall – but it was believed there may be even more offences unreported.

The most recent took place in Kingswinford

on Monday. Two men knocked on the door of an 86-year-old man in New Street and claimed his garden wall needed urgent repairs to prevent it from collapsing.

While the victim was distracted one man went into his bedroom and took an envelope containing £800. Minutes later, they stole £7,000 in cash from 87-year-old man in Glynne Avenue.

Police are looking for two men described as white, aged between 40 and 50, of medium to stocky build with Black Country accents. They were wearing dark clothing and black hats. Call police on 101.

## Construction jobs boom

A BOOM in construction is set to create more than 2,000 new jobs a year in the West Midlands between now and 2019, according to a report.

They are part of an estimated 224,000 new jobs that will be created nationwide over the next five years, says the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB).

According to the report, private housing is set to increase by 4.6 per cent over the next few years, while employment is expected to be particularly strong in Wales and northern England.

In the West Midlands the CITB is predicting 2,320 jobs a year will be created, boosted by projects such as the £500 million redevelopment of Birmingham city centre.

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# Peace make a lot of Happy People

## Album Reviews

By Leon Burakowski

**WORCESTERSHIRE** band Peace have broadened and deepened their jangly guitar rock sound on their second album.

Whereas 2013's debut *In Love* burned brightly with exuberance of Droitwich/Worcester lads realising that they'd created a major buzz on the music scene, *Happy People* (Columbia) — the title ironic given the anxiety often expressed in frontman Harry Koisser's lyrics — sees them living up to that promise.

The guitars still crash and soar superbly but there is added groove here, a funky undertow apparent on *Lost On Me* and *Gen Strange*, edging into 1975 territory.

The title track (lyric sample: "sometimes I feel we're made out of stone", that anxiety again) is likely to become a fans' favourite especially with Douglas Castle's cascading guitar licks, akin to The Edge.

Money has a serious swagger as Peace snarl at those obsessed with filthy lucre and on *I'm a Girl*, over fuzzy fretwork fireworks, the singer laments the baser instincts of men.

Even Harry's rap works on the epic closer *World Pleasure*, a loose funky rocker that recalls *Primal Scream* and the best of *Madchester*.

Now is definitely time to give Peace a chance.

Meghan Trainor comes across as an American equivalent to the likes of Eliza Doolittle and Pixie Lott with her perky pop album *Title* (Epic). She has already proved that she's no one hit wonder, following the ultra-catchy *All About The Bass* with the rap-lite hit *Lips Are Movin*. Mr Almost with its Spice Girls feel could well become hit number three.



Peace are Harry and Samuel Koisser, Douglas Castle and Dominic Boyce

Some tracks have a retro feel, particularly *Close Your Eyes*, 60s style ballad *What If I*, the doo wop sound of *My Selfish Heart*, soul duet *Like I'm Gonna Lose You* with John Legend and the rock 'n' rolling *Dear Future Husband* (that latter including some lyrics that sound like they pre-date feminism).

See the 24-year-old from Nantucket in concert at Birmingham Institute in Digbeth on April 11.

Canadian band *The High Dials* are moody and sometimes magnificent on *In The A.M. Wilds* (Factor) with tracks that grow out of atmospheric soundscapes.

The album is worth checking out if you like Interpol, Doves and The Editors. There is even a hint of Fleetwood Mac on *Yestergraves* and John Foxx on *Club Stairs*.

If you like The Pierces and such 60s West Coast sounds as Jefferson Airplane and Buffalo Springfield, check out the sun-kissed harmonious pop of Merseyside outfit *The Sundowners*, fronted by Niahm Rowe and Fiona Skelly, with Fiona's brother Alfie on lead guitar.

Tracks like *Into The Light* and *Medicine* will appeal to fans of such modern neo-psychedelic outfits as Temples, Quilt and Tame Impala but they don't quite have the verve of those bands.

The Wirral quintet are produced on their self-titled debut from Skeleton Key Records by Fiona and Alfie Skelly's brothers in The Coral, who know a thing or two about high quality psych-folk-pop. The Sundowners will be playing Birmingham city centre's Sunflower Lounge on February 15.

American troubadour *Justin Townes Earle*, the acoustic guitar strumming son of roots rocker Steve Earle, is cut from the fabric of classic US folk/country/rock. Fans of Bob Dylan, Van Morrison and Tom Petty will find plenty to enjoy in his melancholy sound, enhanced by the weepy pedal steel guitar of Paul Niehaus on his latest album *Absent Fathers* (Loose Music).

There is a nagging sense that good as it is, his music is too darn laid-back to grab your attention. Round the Bend makes a good effort though.

El/Cherry Red have come up with a couple of CDs of easy listening/lounge sounds from the 1950s and 60s that would be perfect audio backdrops for any vintage cocktail party. Mexican bandleader *Esquivel* would simultaneously record sections of his orchestra in studios a block apart to enhance the newfangled stereo sound, as heard on two-for-one set *Latin-esque/Exploring New Sounds in Stereo*.

Film composer *Henry Mancini* is celebrated on 28-track compilation *Playboy Themes* featuring the gorgeous *Lujon* but not enough from *Breakfast at Tiffany's*.

## Impressive musicians and dancers

### An Evening of Music and Dance, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE annual showcase brings Birmingham Royal Ballet's musicians out of the orchestra pit and onto the stage of this premier venue for classical music.

Under the baton of Koen Kessels, the sinfonia impressed a full house with its vigour on *Espana* by Chabrier, a tender *Intermezzo* from Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Ravel's rous-

ing *La Valse*. Dance took centre stage with excerpts leaving the audience eagerly anticipating BRB's season at Birmingham Hippodrome.

Compere David Bintley, BRB director, put the greasepaint on for the first time in years for a witty cameo as the toymaker in Coppélia. Momoko Hirata was a delight as the impish doll.

It was encouraging seeing stars of tomorrow, students from Elmhurst School of Dance in Edgbaston. To-

day's stars Celine Gittens and Tyrone Singleton were powerful and elegant in the *Black Swan* pas de deux from Swan Lake. Elisha Willis and Iain Mackay blended glamour and strength in Act II pas de deux from *Cinderella*.

World premieres included Ruth Brill's charming *Matroyoshka*, danced to Shostakovich's *Jazz Suite No.2*, with a sinuous Samara Downs, and Bintley's latest fine tuning of the *Four Seasons* from *Cinderella*. **LB**

## Haunting sound by Lowings

### Kim Lowings & The Greenwood The Woodman Folk Club, Kingswinford

KIM Lowings has a gorgeous voice but occasionally she seems hesitant to let it off the leash. However, even on a low burner her singing is a delight.

One thing which is clearly discernible is how she and The Greenwood have gelled as a group to where they produce a wonderfully harmonious and almost signature sound.

Kim's gentle strumming of the dulcimer complements her voice perfectly.

She presents such a sweet and petite figure from where you would never think a voice of such passion and power could emanate.

With Dave Sutherland, Tim Rogers and Andrew Lowings they created a haunting sound on tracks such as *Monsoon* and *Phoenix*. There were times where she sounded not unlike the great June Tabor as her singing found the deeper notes.

The Stourbridge outfit is also putting together their second album.

Danny Farragher

## REVIEWS



In rehearsal, cast members from *And Then There Were None* at Wolverhampton

## None but the brave in Agatha Christie classic mystery play

### And Then There Were None, Wolverhampton Grand

THERE'S nothing like a dark, atmospheric whodunit at this time of year and the very popular Agatha Christie Theatre Company return to the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre this week in their 10th season, with one of the her most infamous productions.

This play started life as a novel, entitled *Ten Little Indians*, which apparently is the best-selling mystery thriller of all time.

It tells the tale of ten strangers who are stranded on an island off the coast of Devon, having been lured there under unusual circumstances. As one by one they begin to die,

terror soon sets in. A star-studded cast including Paul Nicholas, Emmerdale's Frazer Hinds and Susan Penhaligon lead the way through this tale of mystery and intrigue, leaving audiences on the edge of their seat.

There is a gentle humour throughout the script, as you would expect there is a very English "stiff upper lip" feeling to the proceedings.

Paul Nicholas is well cast as Sir Lawrence Wargrave, the heartless judge, displaying authority throughout, and there is an exceptionally strong performance from Ben Nealon. The play runs until Saturday.

Alison Norton

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# Starfish is first among the friers after winning award

A FISH and chip restaurant has found the recipe for success after receiving a top quality award.

The Starfish restaurant in Tividale has scooped the Fish and Chip Quality Award from the National Federation of Fish Friers (NFFF), the trade body representing the UK's fish and chip shops.

Manager-owner Michael Artemis said: "It is a great honour to be awarded this prestigious award."

"It is a really good pat on the back for all the staff who work extremely hard."

The award recognises restaurants that provide good quality products and high standards of hygiene, as well as friers that show a high level of competence. It is a double for The Starfish, which also received the top '5' rating under Sandwell Council's Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

Mr Artemis added: "Hopefully it will generate a bit of good publicity for the business and bring a bit more footfall through the doors to try the good quality fish and chips."

The NFFF award has been given to 300 restaurants and shops throughout the UK.

An assessor looks at the shop's cleanliness, presentation, hygiene, staff training, frying and sales skills and the quality of the product.

The accreditation aims to set the new benchmark for standards within the industry and to give consumers confidence they will be buying a good quality product at outlets with the award displayed, encouraging more outlets to raise their standards.

Despite the intense competition, fish and chips are still Britain's number one takeaway.



Michael Pili, from the Midland Seafish Industry, with Mike Artemis, owner of Starfish in Tividale

# Airport flies high with record year

BIRMINGHAM Airport enjoyed its busiest-ever year in 2014 with 9.7 million passengers passing through the West Midlands gateway.

Figures show it finished the year with a record December, with another 622,317 passengers travelling through the airport, an increase of 8.4 per cent on last year and the busiest December since 2008.

As a result, over the 12 months the airport handled a total of 9,707,449 passengers; an increase of 6.5 per cent compared to 2013. It also celebrated seven record months in April, May, June, July, August, November and December with Dublin, Dubai and Amsterdam as the top three destinations.

Airport chief executive Paul Kehoe said: "The passenger records have been achieved as a result of airlines introducing new routes and more people realising the ease of travelling to and through Birmingham Airport."

The year also saw the launch of Birmingham's extended runway, which allows aircraft to fly direct to the West Coast of America and to the Far East. The airport also saw its first ever direct service to China.

# Police keep pressure on burglars as crime falls

**BURGLARY** rates across the West Midlands have fallen to an all-time low, police say – although the number of break-ins across Dudley has increased.

Figures released by West Midlands Police show burglaries have decreased in Sandwell and Walsall by close to 15 per cent since last April compared to the same period 12 months ago.

In Wolverhampton there has been an increase of 1.2 per cent, while Dudley break-ins have risen by more than 15 per cent with 773 burglaries for the 2014/2015 period compared to 668 the previous year.

The force is, however, hailing the figures a success with an overall decrease of 10 per cent throughout the region – a total of 942 fewer break-ins – which bosses say is down to officers tightening their grip on known offenders and protecting houses in crime 'hot spots'.

## Halved

It continues a downward trend over the past decade that has seen burglary rates more than halved – from 26,933 in 2002/2003 to 12,704 in 2013/2014.

Chief Inspector Alan Simmonds oversees Operation Illuminate, a project designed to tackle burglary in 'hot-spot' areas.

He said: "We're keeping up pressure on thieves with a history of striking during dark winter evenings and also increasing patrols where historically we've seen more vulnerable properties, like student accommodation, being targeted."

# Ambulance Trust lease is renewed

A WEST Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust team will continue to work at offices in the Dudley borough.

The trust's lease of 4,700 sq ft of space at the Waterfront Business Park, Brierley Hill, has been renewed for another year with commercial property investor Intu Properties.

The agreement was arranged with the help of Vail Williams' team of advisers based in Birmingham, and has saved the NHS trust the cost of finding new premises.

About 50 people work at the trust's offices at the business park from where it provides finance services.

Steve Bott, Vail Williams senior surveyor, said: "Property management is often overlooked. But it is key to the smooth running of any major organisation.

"We're delighted that our commercial property expertise and local knowledge was able to help settle a good deal both for our client, Intu Group and West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust."

By David Banner

Stourbridge ward Conservative councillor Mike Wood, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Dudley South, said: "It is great news that across the West Midlands the burglary rates are coming down."

"I look forward to working with local police to make sure the burglary rate, in Dudley does come down."

The latest success in the region saw two men arrested in the early hours of January 19 on suspicion of breaking into a house in Redhill Gardens, Kings Norton, and taking an Audi A4 from the driveway.

Camera operators on-board the police helicopter kept tabs on the stolen car before traffic police brought it to a stop at the junction of Pershore Road and Bournville Lane.

A 27-year-old man from Sparkhill was arrested from a nearby property, whilst a 35-year-old man was picked up by officers in Pineapple Road, Stirchley, having earlier jumped from the car.

Both men are in police custody on suspicion of burglary.

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## Marching towards a new career



Event organiser Corporal Dan Harper with visitor Kieran Ward and Dudley Jobcentre Plus adviser Elaine Palmer

NEARLY 300 jobseekers packed out a civilian and military careers fair — the first event of its kind staged at an army reserve centre in Dudley.

Members of D Squadron (Dudley) of the Royal Yeomanry joined forces with Jobcentre Plus to organise the fair at the Army Reserve Centre, in Vicar Street. It attracted 275

people as around 30 companies, agencies and education groups showcased what they have to offer. Among those with stands were National Express, GMS Group, Dudley Council, Dudley College, the regular and reserve Army, Navy and Royal Air Force. The fair was suggested by army reservist Corporal Dan Harper, of Rowley Regis.

## Befriending help needed

**VOLUNTEERS are needed to support a befriending service launched by Dudley Council to help vulnerable people in the borough.**

The scheme aims to provide one-to-one and group assistance to housing tenants who are lonely, isolated or facing difficulties.

It aims to help people gain a more

positive outlook by becoming more involved in society, such as attending a group, gaining a new interest and making friends. The scheme has been developed by the council's housing support team.

Informal

Volunteers are needed to provide friendly, informal support to the service users. Where possible a volunteer is matched with someone who has similar interests.

Dudley Council housing boss Councillor Gaye Partridge said: "The befriending service was launched last July and has already made a positive impact upon people's lives. If anyone has any spare time they could dedicate to this project I would urge them to get in touch. It is very rewarding."

Befrienders must be at least 18 and checks will be made. Training is provided. Call 07827 873394 or email [stayconnected@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:stayconnected@dudley.gov.uk)

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## Stars line-up for classic whodunnit

TV favourites Paul Nicholas and Dalziel and Pascoe star Colin Buchanan feature in a production of Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None* at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre this week.

The play opened on Monday and runs until Saturday in a production that celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Agatha Christie Theatre Company. The whodunnit is set on an isolated island where the past catches up with the guests.

It also stars Susan Penhaligon from *Bouquet of Barbed Wire* and *A Fine Romance*, Stafford-born ex-Blue Peter presenter Mark Curry, Emmerdale's Verity Rushworth and Frazer Hines, plus Ben Nealon from *Soldier Soldier*.

## Comedy favourites are on the stage

MAUREEN Lipman, fondly remembered as the BT grannie, will join Gimme Gimme Gimme actor James Dreyfus in Lindsay Posner's new production of 1940s American comedy *Harvey* at Birmingham Rep, before heading to the West End. The production is on in Birmingham until February 21.

The Knights who say Ni are back in Brum with *Spamalot*, the musical based on Monty Python and the Holy Grail, at the New Alexandra Theatre until Saturday. Squeaky-voiced Joe Pasquale is King Arthur and ex-EastEnders Todd Carty his long-suffering servant Patsy.

# Dance fantasy is promising to be a cut above the rest

## It's Heart and Soul from Carol

A SHROPSHIRE raised singer known for some of the biggest power ballads of the 1980s, Carol Decker, brings T'Pau to Bilston venue The Robin 2 on Valentine's Day — apt, as one of their hits was Valentine.

China In Your Hands, which topped the singles chart in the UK and American in 1987, was the band's biggest hit after they hit the big time with Heart and Soul from their debut *Bridge of Spies* album.

Next Saturday's gig has been rescheduled from last October. Tickets cost £17.50 in advance or £19.50 on the door.

Other key gigs — Ricky Wilson will rule the roost when Kaiser Chiefs rock a full Wolverhampton Civic Hall tomorrow (Friday); Hayseed Dixie put a hill-billy twist on classic rock at a sold out Wulfrun Hall on Saturday, the same time Nick Dagger and The Counterfeit Stones spend the night at the Robin 2.



80s ballad queen Carol Decker has a Valentine date with T'Pau at Bilston's Robin 2 venue

**NEW Adventures'** magical production of Edward Scissorhands, Matthew Bourne's ballet version of the cult fantasy movie created by Tim Burton, is being staged at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday to Saturday.

Dominic North, who was award nominated for his performance in the role in 2009, will be sharing the title role with rising star Liam Mower. One of the original trio of boys who played Billy Elliot on stage, Mower last year returned to the West End as 'Older Billy' for the filmed gala version of the show.

The Russian State Ballet of Siberia perform their version of *The Nutcracker* (a little late for Christmas, or very early) at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre on Sunday at 4pm and present an evening performance of *Swan Lake* on Monday.

## Valentine

It will be dance with a Strictly popular appeal when Brendan Cole presents *A Night To Remember* at the Grand on Thursday, February 12.

Fellow Strictly Come Dancing veterans Anton du Beke and Erin Boag present *That's Entertainment* at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Saturday, February 14. A likely Valentine treat for many, the new production will feature Hollywood classics sung by Strictly vocalist Lance Ellington and danced by the star duo, plus world class guest dancers.



Edward Scissorhands is at Birmingham Hippodrome

The ballroom glamour will feature the 25-piece London Concert Orchestra on stage.

Former Strictly favourites Vincent Simone and Flavia Caccace also celebrate the golden age of Hollywood in *Dance Til Dawn* at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Monday to Saturday.

Then Birmingham Royal Ballet launches its season at Birmingham Hippodrome with *Moving Stateside*, featuring three American ballets, from February 18 and Coppélia from February 24.

## Mediaeval music on Night Watch

If you fancy something seriously traditional, different and definitely medieval then *The Night Watch* are a real treat.

The duo of Ian Pittaway and Andy Casserley play tunes which are hundreds of years old on impressive reproduction instruments the like of which would have been played in the 13th century.

They will be playing renaissance music and singing in ways which will transport you back in history at Holy Trinity Parish Church, Church Hill, Mill Street, Sutton Coldfield, B72 1TF this Saturday (February 7) at 7.30pm.

Tickets can be bought through [www.htsc.org.uk/friends-of-holy-trinity/concerts-and-events/the-night-watch/](http://www.htsc.org.uk/friends-of-holy-trinity/concerts-and-events/the-night-watch/)

## Hares to Leveret's new album tour

THREE of English folk's top musicians, Andy Cutting, Sam Sweeney and Rob Harbron, will be performing together as Leveret at the MAC Birmingham on February 12 at 8pm.

The gig is the launch tour for their debut album *New Anything*. Tickets are £15 or £13 with concessions.

Cutting has just finished a new album with Martin Simpson and Nancy Kerr.

On the same night at 8.30pm, duo Nik Morris and Kris Collins, Elmore Row, will be at Brewood Acoustic Club, Brewood Cricket Club, Four Ashes Road.

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## CHOICE



Paddy McGuinness

**Take Me Out (ITV, 8.05pm)**

It seems a long time ago indeed when Paddy McGuinness walked in the shadow of comic sidekick and best friend Peter Kay. Since those days, he's carved a nice little career for himself, married a model and become a father to twins. He's also recently announced he'll be touring again in September, but if you can't wait that long to cash in some of that unique McGuinness humour, he's back on the box tonight with this hilarious dating show. Tonight, he is serving up a treat for those ladies with lights; they will meet lifeguard Liam, barista Jonathon, hairdresser Nick and bagpiper Glenn. Surely love will blossom for some of them? If not, we'll have fun watching it try...

## BBC1

**6.00 Breakfast.** **10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live.** **11.30 James Martin: Home Comforts.** **12.00 BBC News: Weather.** **12.10 Football Focus.** **12.50 Saturday Sportsday.** **1.00 Bargain Hunt.** (R) **2.00 Live Six Nations Rugby Union.** Italy v Ireland (Kick-off 2.30pm). **4.30 Live Six Nations Rugby Union.** France v Scotland (Kick-off 5.00pm).

**6.55 BBC News: Regional News: Weather.**

**7.15 The Voice UK.** Emma Willis and Marvin Humes present the spinning-chair singing contest, in which Tom Jones, Will.i.am, Ricky Wilson and Rita Ora seek out the nation's best vocal talent. As the coaches sit with their backs to the singers, the fun for the viewers is guessing who is going to press their button first, as they silently quiz each other or goad each other on. As they become more keen to complete their teams, will they be less picky in their choices? Tonight's hopefuls include 19-year-old Essex rapper Brooklyn and a familiar face to any fan of 1980s pop - Brother Beyond singer Nathan Moore.

**8.35 The National Lottery: Win Your Wish List.** Shane Richie hosts the game show in which two contestants pick a selection of dream prizes to make up their personal wish lists, all of which have a connection to their shared history together. They then face categories of questions in an attempt to win their chosen items.

**9.25 Casualty.** It's inspection day so Connie gives the staff a pep talk - unaware of the problems in store. Two soldiers are injured in an explosion during a training exercise, but Rita can't understand why one of them is lying about the accident. A computer hacker tries to spread a little happiness, although it comes at a price that lands him in the ED - and as the doctors treat the patient's illness, Robyn inadvertently causes a near-disaster by spreading his virus to Hobly's computer system. Honey catches Big Mac taking stock from the food bank, and Zoe and Max rekindle their passion.

**10.15 BBC News: Weather.**

**10.30 Match of the Day.** **12.00 The Football League Show.** **1.20 Film: Highlander: Endgame.** (2000) **2.50 Weather for the Week Ahead.** **2.55 BBC News.**

## BBC2

**6.20 Film: War and Peace.** (1956) **9.40 Fred Dibnah's Age of Steam.** (R) **10.10 British Isles: A Natural History.** (R) **11.00 Six Nations Rewind.** **12.00 James Martin: Home Comforts.** (R) **12.45 Food & Drink.** (R) **1.15 Jack Lemmon: Talking Pictures.** **2.00 Film: Cowboy.** (1958) **Western, starring Jack Lemmon.** **3.30 Escape to the Country.** (R) **4.30 Final Score.** **5.15 Horrible Histories: Magna Carta Special.** **5.45 The Great British Sewing Bee.** (R)

**6.45 Flag It!** Experts Thomas Plant and Michael Baggott are in Edinburgh, where items brought in by locals include a small ivory trinket box and an example of Monart.

**7.35 Britain's Tudor Treasure: A Night at Hampton Court.** With the royal palace celebrating its 500th anniversary this year, Lucy Worsley and David Starkey present a recreation of the christening service of Henry VIII's son and heir Edward on October 15, 1537. The two historians reveal how Henry's household came together for an occasion that used every part of Hampton Court Palace, from the royal apartments and the kitchens to the Chapel Royal, producing a pageant that was deeply political as well as being a carefully stage-managed performance. (R)

**8.35 Dad's Army.** Mainwaring's platoon tries to raise money for the local Spitfire fund by having a bash at morris dancing. Classic comedy first broadcast in 1974, starring Arthur Lowe. (R)

**9.05 QI XL.** Extended edition. Ross Noble, Kathy Lette, Sue Perkins and Alan Davies attempt to answer host Stephen Fry's range of fiendish questions on the topic of ladies and gents.

**9.50 Film: Broken.** (2012) Premier. An 11-year-old girl's innocent outlook on life is shattered when she sees her neighbour brutally attack a man he suspects of raping his daughter. The incident leaves her unable to trust any of the people and places she had previously considered safe, but finds solace in a friendship with the victim of the assault. Drama, starring Eloise Laurence.

**11.15 Film: Seven Years in Tibet.** (1997) Fact-based drama, starring Brad Pitt and David Thewlis. **1.25 Film: Glory Road.** (2006) **3.15 This Is BBC Two.**

## ITV

**6.00 CITV: Bottom Knockers Street.** **6.10 Bottom Knockers Street.** (R) **6.20 Bottom Knockers Street.** (R) **6.35 Dino Dan.** (R) **6.45 Dino Dan.** (R) **7.00 Animals.** (R) **7.10 Sooty.** (R) **7.25 Signed Stories: Share a Story.** (R) **7.30 Scrambled!** **Scrambled!** **7.35 Scrambled! Nerds & Monsters.** (R) **7.50 Scrambled! Adventure Time.** **8.30 Scrambled! Horrid Henry.** (R) **8.50 Scrambled! Hulk and the Agents of Smash.** **9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **10.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **11.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **12.30 ITV News: Weather.** **12.35 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **1.40 The Undrivesables.** (R) **2.05 The Chase.** (R) **3.05 Doc Martin.** (R) **4.10 Big Star's Little Star.** (R) **5.05 Regional Programme: Weather.** **5.15 ITV News: Weather.** **5.30 You've Been Framed! Strikes Back!** (R)

**6.30 Harry Hill's Stars in Their Eyes.** Five members of the public impersonate their favourite pop stars as they battle it out for the last place in next week's final of the talent show.

**7.30 Planet's Got Talent.** Featuring a man who jumps into paddling pools from incredible heights, a parrot that speaks fluent English, and one of the most dangerous snakes ever seen on the show.

**8.05 Take Me Out.** Lifeguard Liam from Newcastle, barista Jonathon from Newport, hairdresser Nick from Pontefract and bagpiper Glenn from Glasgow all vie for the attentions of 30 single women, intent on capturing their interest and securing a date. However, first they must get the female participants to keep their lights on as a sign of approval. Host Paddy McGuinness monitors their progress and reviews the dating action from last week's couples on the Isle of Fernandos.

**9.20 The Jonathan Ross Show.** The host is joined by Stephen Fry, for his first TV interview since his wedding, former England cricket captain Andrew Flintoff and comedy actor Kevin Hart.

**10.20 ITV News: Weather.** **10.35 Film: Hard Target.** (1993) An out-of-work merchant sailor investigates sadistic hunters who stalk human prey in New Orleans. John Woo's action thriller, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme.

**12.20 Jackpot247.** **0.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA.** (R) **3.40 ITV Nightscreen.**

## CHANNEL 4

**6.05 Trans World Sport.** **7.00 Cycling: Revolution Series.** **7.55 The Morning Line.** **9.00 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **9.30 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **10.00 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **10.30 Fraser.** (R) **11.00 Fraser.** (R) **11.30 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **12.00 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **12.30 Child Genius.** (R) **1.30 Channel 4 Racing.** **4.00 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.00 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **5.30 The Simpsons.** (R)

**6.00 The Simpsons.** Bart goes to work as a comedian in a burlesque theatre and proves a hit with its clientele - until Marge turns up with an angry mob in tow and tries to demolish the place. (R)

**6.30 Channel 4 News.**

**7.00 Our Guy in India.** Guy Martin takes a 1,000-mile journey across India to compete in a race called Rider Mania, the world's largest gathering of Royal Enfield motorbikes. In the first of two programmes, the daredevil rides with a 50-strong biker gang, visits Asia's biggest truck yard and finds himself completely out of his comfort zone. (R)

**8.00 The World's Wildest Weather.** In America, the waters of Lake Erie turn pea green, while a man in New Zealand finds eels swimming in his street after a sudden and violent downpour. A photographer captures rare images of a moustache cloud, New York City grinds to a halt as onlookers witness the beautiful sunset known as "Manhattanhenge", and in Hawaii, volcanic lava creates a terrifying mudslide through a sleepy Austrian village, while wind and rain carve ancient rocks into giant mushroom-like shapes in Egypt.

**9.00 Film: American Reunion.** (2012) Premier. Jim Levenstein and his old friends return to their home town for a high-school reunion. Struck by how much their lives have changed, they set out to relive the sexual misadventures of their adolescence, but only end up making bigger fools of themselves than they did as teenagers. Comedy sequel, starring Jason Biggs and Alyson Hannigan.

**11.15 Film: Panic Room.** (2002) Thriller, with Jodie Foster. **1.20 Film: Earthquake.** (1974) **3.25 Hollyoaks.** (R) **5.25 A Place in the Sun: Home or Away.** (R)

## CHANNEL 5

**6.00 Milkshake!** **10.00 SpongeBob SquarePants.** **10.35 Access.** **10.40 Ice Road Truckers.** (R) **11.40 Ice Road Truckers.** (R) **12.35 Ice Road Truckers.** (R) **1.35 Ice Road Truckers.** (R) **2.35 Film: U-571.** (2000) Second World War adventure, starring Matthew McConaughey. **4.45 Film: Columbo: Murder in Malibu.** (1990) Crime drama, starring Peter Falk.

**6.35 5 News Weekend.**

**6.40 NCIS.** The team is called to a high school on a Marine base, where a pupil has taken his classmates hostage and is threatening to detonate a bomb strapped to his chest. Mark Harmon stars. (R)

**7.25 NCIS.** Gibbs is called to a frozen lake, where two children have discovered the body of a missing marine. The team searches the water for clues and finds three more bullet-riddled corpses, all of which have tattoos linking them to a notorious street gang. The case then becomes a race against time to discover what connects the murders before the serviceman's comrades seek revenge. (R)

**8.20 NCIS.** Gibbs is assigned to examine the apparent suicide of a Pentagon cryptographer suspected of spying. The case is thrown into disarray by the discovery of evidence indicating another person was present at the time of death - meaning the real mole may still be on the loose and has already killed at least once. Crime drama, with Mark Harmon and David McCallum. (R)

**9.20 NCIS.** A suspect dies while being restrained by Ziva, who finds herself accused of using undue force and becomes the subject of an internal investigation. Drama, starring Cote de Pablo. (R)

**10.15 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation.** The team works with the CDC to contain a deadly outbreak in Las Vegas when Sara and Greg are quarantined after responding to a crime scene contaminated with a lethal virus.

**11.10 Law & Order.** A pregnant security guard is injured when a package explodes at a scientific research lab, prompting Green and Lupo to look at a chemist's latest experiments.

**12.10 SuperCasino.** **3.10 10,000 BC.** (R) **4.00 House Doctor.** (R) **4.25 Make It Big.** (R) **5.15 Angels of Jarm.** (R) **5.40 Roary the Racing Car.** (R)

## DIGITAL

**BBC Three** **7.00 Great Movie Mistakes V: Revenge of the Fifth.** **8.00 Top Gear 9.00 Film: Butterfly on a Wheel.** (2007) **10.30 Russell Howard's Good News.** **11.00 Family Guy 2.00 Crims 2.30 South Side Story 3.00 Russell Howard's Good News 3.30 Sweat the Small Stuff 4.00 Close**

**BBC Four** **7.00 Yellowstone: Unnatural Histories.** **8.00 Bright Lights, Brilliant Minds: A Tale of Three Cities.** **9.00 Spiral.** **10.50 Charlie Brooker's Weekly Wipe 11.20 Queen: Days of Our Lives.** **1.20 Top of the Pops: 1980 2.00 Bright Lights, Brilliant Minds: A Tale of Three Cities.** **3.00 Sounds of the 70s 3.30 Close**

**ITV2** **11.15 The Cube: Celebrity Special 12.15 Film: Honey.** (2003) **2.10 Film: Small Soldiers.** (1998) **4.20 You've Been Framed: Kids Special 5.00 Film: Rumor Has It.** (2005) **7.25 Film: Stormbreaker.** (2006) **9.20 Take Me Out - The Goss 10.05 Really Bites 10.50 The Keith Lemon Sketch Show 11.20 Film: Death Race.** (2008) **1.25 Fake Reaction 2.05 Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records 2.55 Teleshopping 5.50 ITV2 Nightscreen**

**ITV3** **11.50 A Touch of Frost 2.00 Wycliffe 3.05 Film: Mutiny on the Buses.** (1972) **5.00 Agatha Christie's Marple 6.00 Doc Martin 8.00 Foyle's War 10.00 Lewis 12.05 A Touch of Frost 2.05 Judge Judy 2.30 Teleshopping**

**ITV4** **11.00 Hogan's Heroes 12.00 The Car Chasers 2.30 Counting Cars 3.25 Pawn Stars 5.10 Storage Wars 6.10 Storage Wars: Texas 7.10 Film: Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment.** (1985) **9.00 Film: Lethal Weapon 4.** (1998) **11.30 Film: Monty Python's The Meaning of Life.** (1983) **1.40 The Motorbike Show 2.30 Hogan's Heroes 2.55 ITV4 Nightscreen 3.00 Teleshopping**

**E4** **11.00 Taking New York: Sneak Peek 11.35 2 Broke Girls 12.00 New Girl 1.00 Melissa & Joey 2.00 How I Met Your Mother 3.00 Troy 4.00 The Jump 5.00 The Jump: On the Piste 5.35 The 100 6.30 The Big Bang Theory 9.00 Film: Terminator 2: Judgment Day.** (1991) **11.40 The Inbetweeners 12.50 How I Met Your Mother 1.50 The Cleveland Show 3.05 Don't Trust the B\*\*\*\* in Apartment 23 3.50 The New Normal 4.10 Desperate Housewives 4.55 My Fair Wedding**

**Film4** **11.00 On the Fiddle.** (1961) **1.00 27 Dresses.** (2008) **3.25 The Wind Rises.** (2013) **6.10 Transformers.** (2007) **9.00 Hanna.** (2011) **11.10 Don't Be Afraid of the Dark.** (2010) **1.15 Snake in the Eagle's Shadow.** (1978) **3.25 Close**

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CHOICE



Guy Martin

**Our Guy in India (Channel 4, 9pm)**  
Grimsby has suddenly made it onto the media map. Strictly Come Dancing's Kevin and Joanne Clifton hail from there, and so does the star of this series, biker Guy Martin. Last week's edition saw him set off on a 1,000-mile trip across India on his Royal Enfield motorcycle, and he continues the journey here by calling in Mumbai. He visits a slum which changes his perception of what such a place is like before sampling the refreshing sensation of monsoon season. Guy makes the final leg of his journey on a traditional trawler en route to Goa, but ignores the resort's famous beaches and heads straight for his ultimate goal – Rider Mania, which has the largest gathering of Royal Enfields on the planet.

BBC1

**6.00** Breakfast. **7.30** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Sunday Politics. **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. With Mark Chapman and the Match of the Day team. **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **2.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.00** Eat Well for Less? (R) **4.00** Your Home in Their Hands. **5.00** Songs of Praise. **5.35** BBC News; Regional News; Weather.  
**6.00** **Animals in Love.** Part two of two. How animals attract a mate, from female capuchin monkeys flirting with the alpha male to the orangutan that chooses its partner in a very 21st-century way.  
**7.00** **Countryfile.** The decline of birds in Leicestershire and Rutland, revealing how farmers and volunteers are trying to encourage them back onto the land and restore their habitat. Including Weather for the Week Ahead.  
**8.00** **Call the Midwife.** Sister Winifred makes it her mission to promote safe sex among the local prostitute population. Sister Monica Joan feels sidelined, while Trixie and Tom argue over their future.  
**9.00** **The British Academy Film Awards.** Stephen Fry hosts the Bafta ceremony live from the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, as stars of the silver screen gather to pat one another on the back in a celebration of the past 12 months' cinematic achievements, while the nominated ones keep their fingers crossed that they won't be going home empty-handed. Birdman, Boyhood, The Grand Budapest Hotel, The Imitation Game and The Theory of Everything compete for best film, while the leading actor categories see Benedict Cumberbatch, Eddie Redmayne, Ralph Fiennes, Felicity Jones and Rosamund Pike flying the flag for Britain. However, they face stiff competition from Jake Gyllenhaal, Michael Keaton, Amy Adams, Julianne Moore and Reese Witherspoon.  
**11.00** BBC News; Regional News; Weather.  
**11.30** **The Apprentice USA.** The celebrity candidates have to create a promotional display for a famous brand of suntan lotion.  
**12.50** Weather for the Week Ahead.  
**12.55** BBC News.

BBC2

**6.20** Great British Garden Revival. (R) **7.20** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **8.05** Countryfile. (R) **9.00** The Football League Show. (R) **10.20** Six Nations Rewind. **11.20** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **12.50** James Martin: Home Comforts. (R) **1.20** Food & Drink. (R) **1.50** **Film:** The Mouse That Roared. (1959) Comedy, starring Peter Sellers. **3.15** Open All Hours. (R) **3.45** To the Manor Born. (R) **4.15** Hi-de-Hi! (R) **4.45** **Film:** It! Trade Secrets. **5.15** Alaska – Earth's Frozen Kingdom. (R)  
**6.15** **Ski Sunday.** Graham Bell and Ed Leigh present from the alpine skiing World Championships in Vail/Beaver Creek, Colorado, featuring the men's and women's downhill races.  
**7.00** **The Motorway: Life in the Fast Lane.** Documentary series charting life on the M6, one of the busiest stretches of motorway in Britain, following the teams preparing for one of the stormiest winters on record. Initially set up in answer to a January 2003 snowstorm that left drivers stranded in their cars for up to 18 hours, these teams have been preparing for snow and ice – but now find themselves facing the stormiest winter in more than 40 years. It's all hands on deck if the Highways Agency is to save its reputation. (R)  
**8.00** **Top Gear.** Jeremy Clarkson, Richard Hammond and James May attempt to improve the ambulance, with each enhancing the one area they think could do with an overhaul.  
**9.00** **Dragons' Den.** Ideas pitched include an idea for giving high heels a new lease of life, eco-friendly coffins, a sleek new take on the electric toothbrush and an online shopping service for men.  
**10.00** **Match of the Day 2.** Mark Chapman introduces the latest Premier League matches, featuring West Ham United v Manchester United, Burnley v West Bromwich Albion and Newcastle United v Stoke City.  
**11.15** **Film: Disconnect.** (2012) The complex lives of several strangers are made far more problematic by the technology they use to communicate. Ensemble drama, starring Jason Bateman.  
**1.05** **Film:** Savage Grace. (2007) **2.30** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **3.25** Holby City. (R) **4.25** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00** CITV: Bottom Knockor Street. **6.10** Bottom Knockor Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knockor Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Animals. (R) **7.10** Sooty. (R) **7.25** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Ultimate Spider-Man. **8.30** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.50** Scrambled!: Deadtime Stories. (R) **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **10.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.30** ITV News: Weather. **12.40** Harry Hill's Stars in Their Eyes. (R) **1.40** Off Their Rockers. (R) **2.10** Mel & Sue's Best Bits. **3.15** Tipping Point. (R) **4.15** **Film:** Moonraker. (1979) James Bond spy adventure, starring Roger Moore.  
**6.35** **Regional Programme:** Weather.  
**6.45** **ITV News:** Weather.  
**7.00** **Get Your Act Together.** Steps singer Claire Richards is mentored by fire-eating act the Black Fire Girls, former politician Ann Widdecombe joins circus ringmaster Norman Barrett, one-time Coronation Street star Oliver Mellor (Dr Matt Carter) is coached by musical quintet the Bottle Boys, TOWIE's Elliott Wright teams up with Cyr wheel performer Billy George, and TV personality Nancy Dell'Olio collaborates with illusionist Hans Klok. Host Stephen Mulhern follows the rehearsals leading up to the contestants' big performances as they compete for a place in the final in two weeks' time.  
**8.15** **All Star Family Fortunes.** Benidorm actress Crissy Rock (Janey) and Ian "H" Watkins from Steps team up with their families in an attempt to win a jackpot of £30,000 for charity.  
**9.00** **Mr Selfridge.** Harry pushes ahead with plans for the Selfridge Estate, aiming to buy a field at auction, but an unexpected rival bidder poses a threat. Miss Mardle makes her mark in fashion.  
**10.00** **ITV News:** Weather.  
**10.15** **Perspectives: Lenny Henry – Finding Shakespeare.** The comedian charts his changing relationship with the Bard, from finding his works boring as a child to starring in productions of Othello and The Comedy of Errors. (R)  
**11.15** **Live: Cup Rugby Union.**  
**12.15** **The Store.** **2.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.15** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

**6.20** NFL: Rush Zone. **6.45** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **7.10** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast. (R) **1.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.55** The Simpsons. (R) **3.25** **Film:** Marmaduke. (2010) Comedy, starring Lee Pace. **5.10** Channel 4 News. **5.30** **Film:** Ice Age. (2002) Animated adventure, with the voice of John Leguizamo.  
**7.00** **The Jump.** Davina McCall presents the semi-final, as the six remaining celebrities compete in high-speed, head-to-head snowboarding races negotiating the steep banks of a slalom tunnel. Concludes tomorrow at 8pm.  
**8.00** **The Hotel.** Mark wants to make the Cavendish more child-friendly and asks general manager James to take charge of a family fun day, hoping the task will make him more decisive in his role.  
**9.00** **Our Guy in India.** Part two of two. Guy Martin visits Mumbai, where more skyscrapers are being built than anywhere else in the world, and clammers 853ft to the top of India's tallest building, the Imperial. Back on ground level, the daredevil visits a slum where a million people live in the space of one square mile, before experiencing a downpour on his Royal Enfield with the arrival of the monsoons. To avoid slow-moving and dangerous roads, he makes the final leg of his 1,000-mile journey by sea, on his way to compete in Rider Mania.  
**10.05** **8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown.** Team captains Sean Lock and Jon Richardson are joined by Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer, while Jack Whitehall is in Dictionary Corner with Susie Dent. Jimmy Carr hosts. (R)  
**11.05** **Film: Patriot Games.** (1992) A former CIA agent prevents an assassination attempt by an IRA splinter group, but one of the terrorists swears revenge on him. Thriller, starring Harrison Ford and Sean Bean.  
**1.10** The Last Leg. (R) **2.05** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.10** Kirstie's Best of Both Worlds. (R) **5.05** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Pip Ahoy! (R) **6.40** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.55** Chloe's Closet. **7.10** Only the Little White Van. **7.15** Bananas in Pajamas. (R) **7.30** Make Way for Maddy. (R) **7.40** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.55** Little Princess. (R) **8.05** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.20** Wanda and the Alien. **8.30** Zack and Quack. (R) **8.40** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.55** Jelly Jam. (R) **9.10** Tolly's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.25** LazyTown. (R) **9.55** SpongeBob SquarePants. **10.30** Robson's Extreme Fishing Challenge. (R) **11.25** Robson's Extreme Fishing Challenge. (R) **12.20** Robson's Extreme Fishing Challenge. (R) **1.20** **Film:** It Could Happen to You. (1994) Romantic comedy, with Nicolas Cage and Bridget Fonda. **3.15** **Film:** Over Her Dead Body. (2008) Supernatural romantic comedy, starring Eva Longoria and Paul Rudd. **4.55** **5** News Weekend. **5.00** **Film:** What to Expect When You're Expecting. (2012) Comedy drama, starring Cameron Diaz. **6.55** **Film:** Miss Congeniality 2: Armed and Fabulous. (2005) FBI agent Gracie Hart is taken off active duty and made the face of the bureau's publicity campaign, but would rather catch crooks than be the focus of media attention – so when her friends are kidnapped, she disobeys orders to run her own undercover investigation with the help of a short-tempered colleague. Comedy sequel, starring Sandra Bullock.  
**9.00** **Film: The Bounty Hunter.** (2010) Premiere. A bail enforcement agent is assigned the task of tracking down his own ex-wife, a wily reporter covering a story about a murder cover-up. However, bringing his former spouse to justice is harder than he anticipated, not least because she has also been targeted by the criminal she is investigating. Action comedy, starring Gerard Butler and Jennifer Aniston.  
**11.20** **Film: Zack and Miri Make a Porno.** (2008) Two friends decide to shoot a porn film, but find having sex for the cameras makes them rethink their feelings for each other. Comedy, starring Seth Rogen and Elizabeth Banks.  
**1.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** 10 Most Annoying Things About 1999. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.15** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Three**  
**7.00** Pop's Greatest Dance Crazes **7.10** The Voice UK **8.30** The British Academy Film Awards: Red Carpet **9.00** Backchat with Jack Whitehall and His Dad **9.30** Russell Howard's Good News **10.00** Family Guy **10.45** Crims **11.15** American Dad! **11.35** Family Guy **12.00** Backchat with Jack Whitehall and His Dad **12.30** South Side Story **1.00** Bangkok Airport **1.55** Abortion: Ireland's Guilty Secret? **2.55** Bangkok Airport **3.50** Close  
**BBC Four**  
**7.00** The Great War **7.40** Britain's Wild Places **8.00** Mark Lawson Talks to Celia Imrie **9.00** Horizon: Why Can't We Predict Earthquakes? **10.00** The Sky at Night **10.30** Kings of '70s Romance **11.30** Genesis: Together & Apart **1.00** Genesis: Three Sides Live **2.25** TOTP2: Genesis **3.10** The Sky at Night **3.40** Close  
**ITV2**  
**11.30** Deirdre and Me: A Tribute **12.00** Take Me Out **1.15** Take Me Out – The Gossip **2.00** Scorpion **2.55** **Film:** Rumor Has It (2005) **4.55** **Film:** Despicable Me (2010) **6.50** **Film:** She's the Man (2006) **9.00** The Ibiza Weekender **10.00** The Keith Lemon Sketch Show **10.30** **Film:** Little Man (2006) **12.25** **Film:** I Now Pronounce You Chuck & Larry (2007)  
**ITV3**  
**11.35** Agatha Christie's Sparkling Cyanide **1.40** Rosemary & Thyme **2.40** Agatha Christie's Marple **4.40** Inspector Morse **7.00** Lewis **9.00** The Best of the Royal Variety **10.00** Northern Lights **11.05** Wycliffe **12.10** **Film:** The Breakfast Club (1985) **2.05** Countrywise Kitchen **2.55** On the Buses **3.20** ITV3 Nightscreen **3.40** Emmerdale  
**ITV4**  
**2.15** **Film:** Blues Brothers 2000 (1998) **4.40** **Film:** Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment (1985) **6.30** Africa Cup of Nations Live. The final (Kick-off 7.00pm). **9.30** Storage Wars **10.00** **Film:** Driven to Kill (2009) **12.00** River Monsters: Untold Stories **1.00** Hell on Wheels **1.55** The Cycle Show **2.55** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** The Shopping **E4**  
**12.30** Revenge **1.30** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **2.30** The 100 **3.30** Melissa & Joey **4.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.00** Marry Me **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Jump: On the Piste **7.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** **Film:** Mission: Impossible (1996) **10.10** The Inbetweeners **11.15** The Big Bang Theory **12.20** 2 Broke Girls **12.45** Rules of Engagement **1.45** The New Normal  
**Film4**  
**11.00** A Man Alone (1955) **1.00** Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs (2009) **2.45** Addams Family Values (1993) **4.35** Three Men and a Baby (1987) **6.45** The Company Men (2010) **9.00** Paul (2011) **11.05** Fitzcarraldo (1982) **2.15** The Punk Singer (2013) **4.00** Close

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**MONDAY**  
**16 Blocks, Channel 5, 11pm**  
A burned-out detective is given the task of escorting a criminal to court to testify against a group of corrupt policemen – but what seems to be a routine assignment quickly turns into a deadly game of cat and mouse as the crooked officers try to stop them reaching the courthouse alive. Thriller, starring Bruce Willis. (2006)

**The Disappearance of Alice Creed, BBC1, 12.30am**  
Two criminals kidnap the daughter of a wealthy family, with the intention of demanding a ransom. However, the hostage is not the helpless victim she appears, while she and both her captors have secrets that threaten to throw the plan into disorder. Thriller, with Gemma Arterton, Eddie Marsan and Martin Compston. (2009)

**TUESDAY**  
**Carry On Loving, ITV, 11.10pm**  
A couple who run a dating agency find themselves inundated with customers, and end up arranging a selection of very unlikely matches – while also contending with their own marital difficulties. Comedy, starring Sid James. (1970)



Tron: Legacy, Friday, BBC2, 11.05pm

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Dawn of the Dead, BBC1, 12.45am**  
Four people take refuge in a shopping mall from a horde of flesh-eating zombies, clearing out the ghoulies already in residence and battenning down the hatches. However, their new home is not as secure as they had hoped, and the beleaguered survivors are soon plunged into increasingly grisly battles with their undead foes. George A Romero's horror sequel, starring David Emge, Ken Foree and Gaylen Ross. (1978)

**FRIDAY**  
**Gosford Park, ITV, 10.40pm**  
A weekend shooting party at a country estate is disrupted by a murder. As the numerous guests deal with their own personal agendas, their actions are quietly observed by their servants, notably an inquisitive maid, who drink in the scandalous gossip while maintaining their own strict social hierarchy. Robert Altman's period drama, starring Maggie Smith. (2001)

**Tron: Legacy, BBC2, 11.05pm**  
A man searching for his father is sucked into a computer-generated world and must compete in gladiatorial combat. Sci-fi adventure, starring Jeff Bridges and Garrett Hedlund. (2010)

# The stars shine brightly on a glittering occasion

Award shows are sycophantic and ten a penny. So why-oh-why do we find ourselves continually drawn to the predictable run of well-rehearsed accolades, TV clips, a conveyor belt of celebrity guests dining "... and the winner is..." and half-hearted applause which gets weaker as the evening draws on?

The answer is, quite simply, because they're addictive. From the moment you dare to mutter, "Let's just watch this bit..." you're hooked, unable to tear yourself away from "just one more" clip or the next star guest in case you miss a vital snippet of gossip which will be the talk of the town by the morning.

So, which films and their stars will be hitting the headlines on Monday? It's highly likely that The Grand Budapest Hotel, Birdman and The Theory of Everything will dominate the ceremony – The Grand Budapest Hotel leads the way with 11 nominations, while the other two trail not very far behind with 10 each.

But the likes of The Imitation Game, Boyhood, Whiplash, Nightcrawler and homegrown favourites Mr Turner and

Pride have the potential to cause a few upsets.

It's a big night for host Stephen Fry too – this will be the 10th time he's presented the event, which takes place once again at London's Royal Opera House in Covent Garden.

"Hosting the Film Awards has always been a highlight of my year," says Fry. "The opportunity to help the Academy promote filmmaking and encourage cinema-going means a lot to me.

"I've met many heroes and had the honour of introducing many young talents that are now busy forging remarkable careers for themselves. Seeing the photos from each year back I can chart my bewildering changes in weight too..."

"Hard as it may be for some characteristically sceptical Britons to believe, the Baftas have real kudos, reputation and cachet all over the world of film-making," he adds. "I, old as I am, never cease to be shamelessly glorified by the sight of so many legendary names who come every year as nominees and presenters."

Everyone at the BBC will be smiling on the night too – its film division is assured of at least one gong, having been given the Outstanding Contribution to British Cinema award.

"I cannot think of a more deserving institution for this award than BBC Films, unbelievably in its 25th year and with more than 250 predominantly British films in its catalogue," explains Nick Powell, chairman of Bafta's film committee.

"With a wide range of films from populist British box office hits like Billy Elliot and Mrs Brown's Boys D'Movie and an enviable collection of ground-breaking films, I hope that this award will be not simply a recognition of past and present achievements but also an affirmation of why BBC Films is so important for the film industry both here in the UK and further afield. Here's to the next 25 years."

Too right – with a great track record to date, we get the feeling this won't be the last award BBC Films wins. In fact, expect its staff to get not just a pat on the back at this ceremony, but at many more similar events for decades to come.



Stephen Fry hosts, The British Academy Film Awards, Sunday, BBC1, 9pm

## BEST OF THE REST

**MONDAY**  
**Heston's Recipe for Romance Channel 4, 9pm**

Every year, around 16 million couples in the UK celebrate Valentine's Day with a romantic meal, but is there really a connection between food and love? In this one-off special, Heston Blumenthal joins forces with a team of scientists and psychologists to put together a menu they hope will affect how people feel about each other. Five couples at different stages of their relationships are invited to a dinner that includes chocolate in every course, plus a 'Cupid's cocktail', featuring a scent designed to trigger a romantic memory.

**TUESDAY**  
**The Secret Life of Four-Year-Olds Channel 4, 8pm**

Documentary exploring the world of 10 four-year-olds as they meet in a nursery rigged with cameras that capture every glance, whisper, tussle and emotion. With their parents watching on monitors, the children encounter one another for the first time in October and then again in May. Overseeing the action are two experts – educational neuroscientist Paul Howard-Jones and developmental psychologist Sam Wass – as the youngsters make and break friendships, and find their place in this new social group.

**The Gift BBC1, 9pm**

New series. Mel Giedroyc and Matt Baker meet people who would like to find someone after many years so they can say thank you or sorry. In 1987, soldier Patrick Provis was left fighting for his life after being hit by an IRA mortar. An Army helicopter crew flew in to rescue him – and Patrick cannot rest until he has thanked the person who took the decision to save him. Grace Bates has spent almost 60 years wanting to apologise to Herman, the first man she ever loved. They met as teenagers in the 1950s, but a terrible mistake by Grace left Herman heartbroken.

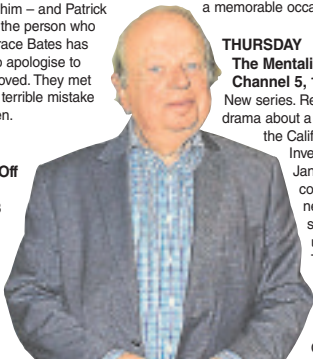
**WEDNESDAY**  
**The Great Comic Relief Bake Off BBC1, 8pm**

Forget the fact that more than 13 million people tuned into last year's final – if you want proof that The Great British Bake Off is a genuine hit, just look at the calibre of stars turning out for this, the first of four celebrity charity edition. Sue Perkins (Mel is otherwise engaged) is on presenting duties as Joanna Lumley, Jennifer Saunders,

Lulu, and Dame Edna Everage pick up their bowls and get whisking. But while we may be impressed to see these four entertainment legends together in one tent, Paul Hollywood and Mary Berry will be judging them purely on their baking ability, as they attempt to make a giant cookie or biscuit, 12 mini fruit tarts, and a tiered chocolate cake inspired by a memorable occasion.

**THURSDAY**  
**The Mentalist Channel 5, 10pm**

New series. Return of the crime drama about a consultant working for the California Bureau of Investigation. Lisbon asks Jane not to tell their colleagues about their new relationship yet, as she only recently broke up with Agent Pike. They return to the CBI offices to find that Emily Swallow has left for Seattle and has been replaced by Quantico rookie Michelle Vega, while of more



Barging Round Britain with John Sergeant, Friday, ITV, 8pm

immediate concern is a case involving the murder of an FBI agent who had been investigating a gun runner. Simon Baker and Robin Tunney star.

**FRIDAY**  
**Barging Round Britain with John Sergeant ITV, 8pm**

It seems difficult to imagine in this day and age, what with roads and trains being so reliable, but once upon a time Britain relied upon its canal network to keep its industry ticking over. Nowadays, of course, the waterways tend to be more of a lifestyle choice for those who live on them, as opposed to a necessity, and the picturesque scenery plays host to a vibrant community of like-minded people. In this new eight-part series, broadcaster John travels the length and breadth of the nation's canals as he meets some of the unique people who call them home. He begins at the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, which at 127 miles is the country's longest, and enjoys the view as he crosses the Pennines.

**NCIS: New Orleans Channel 5, 9pm**  
New feature-length episode introducing the new NCIS spin-off. Gibbs heads to Louisiana to help an old friend track down a killer. Mark Harmon and Scott Bakula star.

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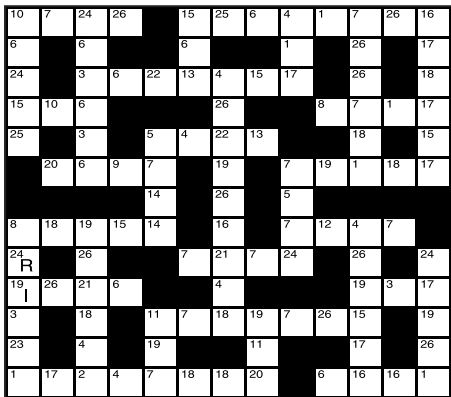
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## Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
H	S	V	G	Q	X	Z	L	I	Y	P	F	M
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
K	D	N	B	R	J	T	U	W	O	E	C	A

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

## Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

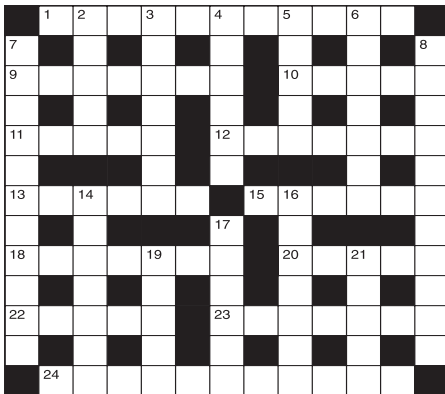
### Cryptic Clues:

#### Across

- Their manipulations won't be right (4-7)
- See 15 Across
- A base for one who is forging (5)
- Little room of classical associations (5)
- Nun gets disturbed by weapon (4-3)
- You'll find me in the way, as the wanderer did (6)
- 15 & 9Ac.** Tools used by toboggan manufacturers? (6-7)
- This presents any escape from a bottle-neck (7)
- It's a piece of simple attire (5)
- Trees that may be scattered to the winds? (5)
- Substitute on his feet endlessly (5-2)
- Liberated retainers who own land (11)

#### Down

- The ant is back in the stem, methinks (5)
- Mulled claret with the last of the wine is sweet stuff (7)
- Provide aid for a vessel before it's wrecked (6)
- Bird, the famous sailor (5)
- Stormed around Virginia and did some pillaging (7)
- It's occupied by the stall-holder (7,4)
- Secret tribe to appoint to a certain state (11)
- An Old Testament female - a different one (7)
- Friend returns to touch down in the far north (7)
- Put the others in the Post Office quickly (6)
- Some cheap stones here if you want to make some dough (5)
- Tree of greater age (5)



### Quick Clues:

#### Across

- Abbreviation (11)
- Edible (7)
- At no time (5)
- Eat away (5)
- Sure (7)
- Save (6)
- Cling (6)
- Representative (7)
- Of towns (5)
- Smell (5)
- Beginning (7)
- Unrelenting (11)

#### Down

- Excel (5)
- Vivid representation (7)
- Medium (6)
- Singer (5)
- Preclude (7)
- Insight (11)
- Inebriation (11)
- Fancy (7)
- Daily (7)
- Lines up (6)
- Freight (5)
- Foundation (5)

## Sudoku

4			7		3	2		
			9					5
	3	1	5				9	
6		3	8		5			9
1					5			8
9			2		4	3		7
		7						
				2				
	9	6		7				2

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

8	9	5	7	3	1	6	2	4
6	3	4	5	2	9	7	8	1
1	2	7	6	8	4	5	3	9
3	8	2	1	5	7	9	4	6
5	6	1	9	4	2	3	7	8
7	4	9	3	6	8	1	5	2
9	7	8	4	1	3	2	6	5
4	5	3	2	9	6	8	1	7
2	1	6	8	7	5	4	9	3

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Toy-shops; 5 Idol; 9 Flea; 10 In camera; 11 Seals; 12 Overseas; 13 Slow punctures; 18 Artistry; 19 Rued; 20 Pimpled; 21 Agate; 22 Ring; 23 Bedstraw. Down: 2 Oil-well; 3 Swallow; 4 Pontoon-bridge; 6 Dresser; 7 Leaders; 8 Talent; 13 Scamper; 14 Ottoman; 15 Pestle; 16 Upright; 17 Electra. QUICK - Across: 1 Jettison; 5 Stem; 9 Wand; 10 Addition; 11 Tutor; 12 Include; 13 Senselessness; 18 Antic; 19 Seek; 20 Liberal; 21 Train; 22 What; 23 Assemble. Down: 2 Erasure; 3 Tedious; 4 Old wives' tales; 6 Tribute; 7 Manners; 8 Discus; 13 Shallow; 14 Notable; 15 Endure; 16 Nostrum; 17 Special.

## Quiz

- Which film star was born Margarita Carmen Cansino?
- Of which autonomous Spanish region is Pamplona capital?
- Of what nationality was Errol Flynn?
- At which racecourse is the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe run?
- Who, in the Old Testament, fashioned the Golden Calf?
- Pennsylvania was originally established as a refuge for which religious sect?
- Which Gospel author is patron saint of artists?
- Which pipe-making material is also called sepiolite?
- In which US state is Fort Knox?
- How are artists Proesch and Passmore better known?

### Last week's solutions:

**Quiz:** 1 The old London Bridge; 2 Glasgow; 3 A bird; 4 Halley's Comet; 5 Bob Fosse; 6 Iceland; 7 Brian Redhead; 8 All Saints' Day; 9 Sugar Ray Leonard; 10 Robert Kennedy.

### Niner: SPREADING

## Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

**752435** gives a flower,  
**1368** gives a tree,  
**9887** gives a plant.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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There is a also a single garage and a rear garden.

Contact 01902 885894 or visit the [www.wakeman-online.com](http://www.wakeman-online.com) website



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A recently converted 3 bedroom ground floor apartment finished to an extremely high standard and centrally located with commuter links to Halesowen and Birmingham. Featuring 2 double bedrooms, both with fitted wardrobes, 2 bathrooms, 1 single bedroom, 2 extra rooms downstairs, secondary glazing throughout. Allocated parking. Viewings recommended. EPC: C



**AMBLECOTE, High Street £725 pcm+Fees**  
A fantastic opportunity to rent a new build home on a select development. Featuring homes of 3 generous size bedrooms (master with en-suite) finished to an exceptional standard. Featuring spacious lounge/dining areas, well appointed kitchens, downstairs WC, 3 bedrooms with family bathrooms & master bedroom with en-suite, 2 allocated parking spaces, front & rear gardens. These homes will not be available for long. EPC: B/C



**HALESOWEN, Melbourne Road£695 pcm+Fees**  
Within walking distance to Halesowen, is this 3 story town house. Well worth an inspection inside and set within a quiet cul-de-sac, comprising of: 3 bedrooms, large fitted dining kitchen, very large lounge, downstairs wc, house bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, off road parking for 2 cars and garage, close to local schools and college. EPC: E



**HALESOWEN, Haden Hill Road£695 pcm+Fees**  
Fully refurbished to a very high standard 3 bedroom detached house close to Halesowen Town Centre. This lovely property has a reception room, brand new fitted kitchen with oven/hob, dining room with patio doors leading to a private rear garden, upstairs are 2 double bedrooms & 1 single, brand new fitted family bathroom with shower. Driveway for 2 cars. EPC: B/C



**HALESOWEN, Sanderson Place£625 pcm+Fees**  
Luxury living in Hayley Green. A superb ground floor apartment offering spacious accommodation including open plan lounge/kitchen and diner, 2 double bedrooms, master with en-suite, further well appointed bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking. EPC: B



**HALESOWEN, Haden Hill Road£625 pcm+Fees**  
A great size house close to Halesowen and buses to Halesowen and Cradley Heath just outside. This home features 2 reception rooms, dining kitchen, downstairs v.c. 3 good size bedrooms, bathroom with separate shower. Benefits also include gas central heating, front and rear gardens, garage, driveway. EPC: B/C



**HALESOWEN, Tanhouse Lane£595 pcm+Fees**  
A well presented 3 bed detached house with good transport links to Halesowen and Stourbridge. This property features large lounge, kitchen/diner, utility room, bathroom with shower, garage and driveway parking. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: D



**LYE, The Pumphouse £595 pcm+Fees**  
Contemporary fully furnished luxury living. Generous size lounge with state of the art SKY plus HD/TV/DAB chrome sockets, 1 double bedroom with fitted wardrobes, wall mounted LCD/DVD, stunning fitted kitchen with integrated appliances, beautiful bathroom with shower, electric central heating, allocated parking space with visitor spaces, secure ported access phone system, viewing highly recommended. EPC: C



**CRADLEY HEATH, Meadow Walk£550 pcm+Fees**  
Modern semi detached house within a popular residential area featuring gas central heating, spacious living room, modern fitted kitchen, downstairs house bathroom, 3 good sized bedrooms, large rear garden, driveway parking for 2 cars. Available immediately EPC: E



**STOURBRIDGE, Churchill Drive£525 pcm+Fees**  
Lovely spacious 3 bedroom semi-detached home is available in this quiet cul-de-sac. Features include large living room, dining room and modern fitted kitchen with integrated appliances, downstairs bathroom and further shower room upstairs with 2 double and 1 single bedroom. Driveway parking. EPC: D



**KIDDERMINSTER, Keats Place£495 pcm+Fees**  
A well presented 2 bedroom ground floor flat, having accommodation including; hall, lounge, refitted kitchen with appliances, 2 bedrooms, bathroom, gas central heating, double glazing and cul de sac location. Virgin Broadband connection is available. EPC: C



**CRADLEY HEATH, Elbow Street£475 pcm+Fees**  
Sited in a quiet location, within walking distance to Old Hill town and local train station this unfurnished ground floor flat comprising electric storage heating, large living room, fitted kitchen, 1 double and 1 single bedroom, bathroom with shower, communal gardens, allocated parking. EPC: C



**HALESOWEN, Highfield Road£475 pcm+Fees**  
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**HALESOWEN, Howley Grange Road£410 pcm+Fees**  
Part furnished ground floor flat available in this popular location, gas central heating, living room/fitted kitchen with archway through to a double bedroom, shower room, allocated parking. Gas (in winter months) and water rates included in the rental. EPC: C



**CRADLEY HEATH, Victoria Gardens£395 pcm+Fees**  
A modern top floor apartment, in the centre of Old Hill with local bus stop outside and Old Hill train station close by. This apartment comprises of 1 double bedroom, electric storage heating, double glazing, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, allocated parking, unfurnished. EPC: C



**LYE, High Street £375 pcm+Fees**  
Fully refurbished in the centre of Lye. This spacious 2nd floor apartment features a lovely lounge, 1 double bedroom, bathroom, modern and contemporary kitchen/ diner, electric heating, double glazing, on road parking. Available now. EPC: E



**HALESOWEN, Broadway Avenue£700 pcm+Fees**  
Centrally located and a full refurbishment. An immaculately presented semi-detached house, within minutes of Halesowen Town Centre and features 2 large doubles and a large single bedroom, brand new kitchen, lounge/diner, separate shower cubical in the bathroom and separate toilet. Not to be missed! EPC: D



**HALESOWEN, Hunnington Crescent£650 pcm+Fees**  
An unfurnished semi detached house in this very popular central location of Halesowen, featuring gas central heating, living/dining room, fitted kitchen, 3 good sized bedrooms, bathroom with shower, front & rear gardens, garage & driveway parking. Available March. EPC: E



**HALESOWEN, Elmtree Grove£550 pcm+Fees**  
A 3 bedroom semi-detached dormer bungalow in a quiet residential area and close to Colley Lane Primary School, number 9 bus route and Halesowen. Featuring 3 double bedrooms (one downstairs), living room, fitted kitchen, gas central heating, double glazed, new carpets throughout, small private garden, garage and driveway. EPC: F



**HALESOWEN, Wicklow Close£525 pcm+Fees**  
A well presented modern 2 bedroom ground floor apartment on the very popular Squirrels estate, Halesowen. The property has a reception hall, lounge, modern kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower. Private large garden & garage is located in a separate block. A lovely property which is available now! EPC: B/C



**TIPTON, Ferguson Drive £450 pcm+Fees**  
A lovely modern 1st floor apartment, which is ideally located for Dudley and Wednesbury. This great apartment features 2 bedrooms, spacious lounge, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, electric storage heating, double glazing, 2 allocated parking spaces, communal gardens, internal viewing recommended. EPC: C



# Parking hitch a thing of past

By Graham Breeze

**Caravan and trailer owners should be on red alert at the arrival this month of the new Passat as Volkswagen looks to push the eighth-generation model upmarket.**

It's neither magic or witchcraft but VW has solved all your agonising reversing problems at one swoop. In simple terms the new Passat reverses for you – you just need the confidence to sit behind the wheel and watch.

Lots of manufacturers have introduced park assist systems which allow you to let the car reverse into one of those tight spaces but this is the first time I have come across a Trailer Assist reversing system – without the need for any modification or adaptation of the trailer.

The good news is that is you choose a model with parking assist the trailer system only cost an extra £465, which could turn out to be the best cash you ever spend if like me you find reversing a bit of a problem.

Everything is new about the eighth generation Passat, which since launch in 1973 has racked up over 22 million sales worldwide with VW seeing the model as the bridge between the upper medium and premium class.

Only diesel engines are available in the UK, ranging in power from a 1.6-litre 120 PS, through two 2.0-litre units with 150 or 190 PS, to a range-topping 2.0-litre bi-turbo with 240 PS, DSG gearbox and 4MOTION four-wheel drive. A plug-in hybrid GTE version with a 1.4-litre TSI petrol engine and electric motor will follow in October and a frugal BlueMotion with a 1.6-litre engine returning 78 mpg and just 95 g/km of CO2 will join the range in June 2015, while an Alltrack version of the estate is due in July.

At launch, five trim levels are offered: S, SE, SE Business, GT and R-Line. All offer a high level of standard features with highlights including post-collision braking system and mis-fuelling prevention on all; front assist, adaptive cruise control, pre-crash system, driver profile selection, ergo comfort seats and front and rear parking sensors on SE and above; and discover navigation on the SE Business which is aimed at fleet drivers.

Heated Alcantara seats, three-zone climate control and 18-inch wheels are standard on GT, while the range-topping R-Line adds a host of bespoke design features.

It's shorter than the old model, but features a longer wheelbase, which means it has more head and leg room.



**“It’s shorter than the old model, but features a longer wheelbase, which means it has more head and leg room.”**

There are four TDI diesels, with the range starting with a 1.6 TDI with 120PS. Volkswagen claims that the 150PS 2.0 TDI with 340Nm of torque will be the most popular.

On test was a 190PS 2.0-litre diesel estate, with 400Nm of torque, a top speed of 144mph, 0-62mph in 7.9seconds and combined fuel figures of 61.4mpg. CO2 levels are impressive at just 120g/km. The front-wheel drive model came with six speed DSG gearbox.

New optional features include in-car connection to the internet via a smartphone and wi-fi hotspot allowing you to access traffic data, news and weather via the colour touchscreen information system.

There's predictive pedestrian protection through a radar scanning system, traffic jam assist, emergency stopping assist and later this year a new system will arrive replacing the traditional instrument cluster with an interactive 12.3inch display system and a heads-up screen display.

On the road the new Passat is quiet and refined with very little engine or road noise and handling is not a problem.

There is no doubt that new Passat is an impressive arrival and the reversing system an absolute joy but it all comes at a price with the bottom range model likely to cost you over £22,000. The test car had a starting price of £30,900 but with a host of extras that shot up to over £36,000.



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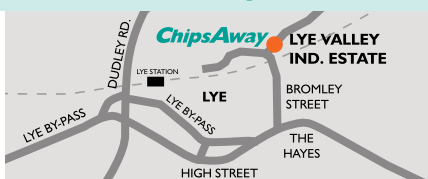
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# Smart, well put together, stylish and sensible but little pricey

By Matt Joy

The changes might be minuscule, but the S6 remains an absolute tour de force for those who can't live without a big V8 in their lives.

Audi has pressed the refresh button on the full A6 range, so the muscle-bound S6 saloon and Avant estate get the same (tiny) makeover. The grille now has twin bars running across it instead of single, thicker ones, and the headlights, bumper and air inlets have been slightly reshaped.

Don some X-ray specs and you'll see adaptive air suspension set to 20mm lower than the standard A6, while the brake calipers are now matt black, the rear diffuser has an aluminium-look blade and the full-LED headlights are ever-so-slightly slimmer.

The wider changes to the base car have made it a better-looking platform for the S and, in 2015, the RS development teams to deal with.

Side skirts that jut out more prominently, 19-inch twin-spoke alloy wheels and those flashy headlights give it great window shopping appeal.

But the S6's civility is stuffed deep down inside its bag of tricks and there's no getting rid of it. At first glance this could just be an S-line spec A6, and its relative understatement is one of the qualities that help it sell so well.

In finest fast Audi tradition you can choose an estate model as well as the saloon. The wagon is a bit heavier, not that you'll notice unless you take it on a track day, but it's prettier and as roomy as an empty shed.

## Quality

The question marks have to come further forward, in the passenger zone. With such shapely seats and high-quality leathers cocooning you like a Persian prince, the S6 is better for luxuriating than it is for folding the seats down and throwing a load of planks into.

It's just too well-appointed for that.

Turbocharging a V8 gets you lots of things; power and speed being two. The S6 is as rapid as the people who take used plates away at all-you-can-eat buffets, and it doesn't feel particularly like a turbocharged engine. It pulls harder and harder with a barrel-chested bellow as the revs rise, a lot like the engines of S-car generations past.

Grip and traction are beyond what you'd ever be able to exploit on the road. The way it drags itself so violently but so steadily out of tight corners is uncanny. G-force has never been so unthreatening.

Most roads simply aren't big enough for the S6 to stretch its legs, but at normal speeds it's as stable as Ayers Rock. Sure, it's firm over bumps on its huge (optional) 21-inch wheels, but if history has taught us anything it's that Audi buyers don't tend to mind sacrificing ride quality for aesthetics.

At £56,000, the saloon is not a cheap car. And at that price Audi kindly leaves a lot of the technology and luxury that you're likely to want on the options list, so quickly totting up beyond £60,000 is a given.

It's big, hugely capable and prestigious, but smaller premium-brand cars that will do the job just as well could offer a much better value alternative.

The S6 is a gentleman's express; a large, powerful and long-legged car with the ability to cross continents at speed without breaking a sweat.

It's not particularly affordable or cheap to run, but it is very lovely.

If money is no problem and the new looks light your fire more than ever, this is a solid choice that won't leave you disappointed.

This car summed up in a word: Suave.

If this car were a ... suit, it would be from Marks & Spencer. It's smart, well put together and stylish, but eminently sensible.



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## Compact and affordable Alto

### Commercial feature

Small cars have never made more sense than they do now and all the signs point to models from the diminutive end of the motoring spectrum becoming ever more relevant in the future.

The Alto is the latest in a long line of small car efforts from Suzuki and it's been usefully improved in this guise - as it needed to be if this brand is to make hay as the demand for compact, affordable cars increases.

There are more fashionable choices in the citycar sector of course, but most of them are significantly pricier.

Add in low running costs and cheeky up-and-at-'em handling and this Alto remains well worth considering for budget buyers.

The Alto's 1.0-litre petrol engine looks ideal for a compact urban vehicle - and it's a bit more sophisticated these days thanks to the addition of Dual VVT variable valve timing.

The 3-cylinder unit musters 67bhp and 90Nm maximum torque at 4,800rpm. That doesn't sound thrilling but in a car that tips the scales at 855kg, it's enough to cover the 0-60mph sprint in 14 seconds. Stick at it and a top speed of 96mph is also attainable.

Worth mentioning too that an optional four-speed fully automatic transmission is available, a relatively unusual proposition in this segment. The

Alto is 3500mm long with a 2,360mm wheelbase and that helps it achieve a super-tight turning radius of 4.5m that should be ideal for manoeuvring into tight parking spaces or executing the odd cheeky U-turn.

The bottom line is usually promoted to headline status when we're talking about citycars and the Alto's costs look low enough to warrant just such a big splash.

The 1.0-litre petrol engine can return an impressive 65.7mpg on the combined cycle along with emissions that now dip under the important 100g/km barrier at 99g/km. It's greener than Robin Hood on a rollercoaster but if you specify the four-speed automatic gearbox, environmental performance will tail off. The auto model gets 53mpg and 118g/km emissions.

## High performance continues

This year Vauxhall is celebrating the 25th anniversary of one of its most famous and dramatic models, the Lotus Carlton, which started a long tradition of Griffin-badged performance saloons that still survives today.

The Lotus Carlton was the fastest four-door saloon in the world when it was launched in 1989, 65 years after Vauxhall produced Britain's first 100mph road car.

With 377bhp from its twin-turbocharged engine, the Carlton (pictured above) could achieve the 0-62 sprint in 4.9 seconds and would go on to a top speed of 176mph.

Its chassis was developed by Lotus, resulting in a car with the handling ca-

pabilities and top speed to keep up with the finest supercars of the day.

A total of 440 Lotus Carlton were produced from 1989 to 1994 as a joint project between Vauxhall and Lotus, with each car costing £48,000.

Commenting on the iconic car, Stuart Harris, current head of carline brand at Vauxhall, said: "Everyone at the time said it was completely inappropriate for a manufacturer like Vauxhall to launch a 176mph car.

"It was better than the competition in every conceivable way and will go down as one of the most iconic Vauxhalls of all time. It was landmark product for Vauxhall, which to this day is still much loved.

"It introduced the brand to people who would not have considered driving a Vauxhall before. The car put a question mark in people's heads and

got them talking - just like the cars in today's VXR range do."

After the Lotus Carlton there were talks of a successor, but the project did not go ahead, meaning the 3.0-litre quad-cam engined Omega produced from 1993 to 1997 became the final large performance saloon for Vauxhall through the rest of the 1990s.

By the early 2000s, though, large performance cars were firmly back on Vauxhall's agenda thanks to the all-new VXR range.

In 2007, it spawned the 420PS VXR8 saloon, based on sister-company Holden's Clubsport R8.

Vauxhall's latest incarnation, the VXR8 GTS, produces 576bhp in its current form - more power than its main rivals the BMW M5 and Mercedes E63 AMG, yet costing a substantial £20,000 less.






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Official Fuel Consumption Figures for the Suzuki Alto range mpg (litres/100km) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km): Urban 54.3-54.3 (5.2-5.2), Extra Urban 74.3-74.3 (3.8-3.8), Combined 65.7-65.7 (4.3-4.3), CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 99-99 g/km.

The above fuel consumption figures are based on an EU test for comparative purposes only and may not reflect real driving results. \*Model shown Alto SZ available from £5,999 (Metallic paint available at £399). \*VAT free offer on Alto SZ: Alto 1.0 SZ available from £5,999, including customer saving of £1,200 equivalent to VAT amount of previous on the road price of £7,199 (SZ). Manual transmission only. VAT equivalent reduction is not available on vehicle options or accessories. For full details contact your local participating Suzuki Dealer. Offer subject to availability for vehicles privately registered between 1st January 2015 to 31st March 2015 from participating Authorised Suzuki Dealers only. Offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offers. All prices and specifications correct at time of going to print. †Manual transmission only.



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Finance example: 07/57 Citroen C4 Picasso 1.6 HDi Diesel VTR, Cash Price £4995, Deposit £300, Amount of credit £4695, Fixed interest rate 6.25% Flat rate, 12% APR, 60 Payments of £102.71 (£23.70 per week) Total amount payable £6462.26 (Excludes £150 Document fee and £150 Completion fee, Subject to status)

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living with terminal illness.  
For more information on how  
to support your hospice,  
please go to  
www.birminghamhospice.org.uk  
or call  
**0121 472 1191**  
Reg. charity number: 503456

## 1 Family

### clothing -

### womens

THREE LADIES COATS, one red tie  
belt, one dark green, one short grey  
leather coat, all size 12, £10 each.  
07773 485881

### elderly &

### disabled

MOBILITY SCOOTERS from £350  
can deliver, servicing available.  
Call: Powerlink, Blackheath 01384  
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### ROMA LIGHTWEIGHT

### WHEELCHAIR

Quick release wheels, with  
puncture proof tyres, anti  
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cushion, hardly used.

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able. 01952 405397/07897 273617

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## 2 Leisure Time

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BIKE FOR SALE  
Men's specialized Rockhopper  
mountain bike, Hope hydraulic  
brakes, 26 inch wheels, colour  
blue.  
£250 ono.  
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**TANDEM CANNONDALE**  
Excellent condition.  
Aluminium frame.  
Shimano 24 gears.  
Hydraulic brakes  
£600.  
Contact Pete 01902 757331.

**caravans /  
motorhomes**

**ABBEY SPECTRUM 215**, 2 berth,  
2008, one owner, ish, CRIS reg,  
awning and accessories. £7,500  
ono. 01902 681501.  
**LUNAR LX2000 460-2** 2 berth  
caravan, end bathroom, CD,  
mover, awning, extras, £2,950.  
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This is your opportunity to join  
one of the Midlands leading  
Angling Clubs.  
We have on offer superb fishing  
on all of our 11 locations includ-  
ing 8 pools, 2 stretches of the  
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areas of Wolverhampton,  
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Seasons. £600. 01562 823596.

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ulate £300. o.n.o. 01902 884900.  
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**PLAN LARGE FOUR**  
**DRAWER CHESTS OF**  
**DRAWERS**

White carcass, grey drawer  
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3 drawer bedside cabinets.  
Cost £600 in sale.

Will sell for £250.  
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**Top Soil, Building Sand**  
**Paving/Concrete Sand**  
**Decorative Gravels**  
**Delivered Bagged or Loose**  
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tisement today? We would respect-  
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A BEST CASH PRICE PAID  
FOR DIE CAST CARS /  
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Air fix, Britains, Corgi, Dinky,  
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Best prices paid.  
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Cash ready for your old 7ins  
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Must be in sleeves.  
Call or email me at:  
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**6 Property**

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2008, only 90,000 miles, white, e/w, e/m, alarm, MOT, c/l, pas, diesel, full roof rack, factory fitted secure locks, rhino tube.

**£2,800 ono.**  
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**MX5 1.8 red.** 2001, 87k, alloys, MoT, January 16, PAS, EW, £1,750 ono. **07760 887220.**

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**SEAT IBIZA 1.4**

Petrol, 2010, one lady owner, fsh, 12 months MoT, c/l, cruise, e/w, a/c, CD, 34k, very good condition.

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met grey, electric windows, alloys,  
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2.0 Gold, 1988, 60,000 miles only,  
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2004, sh, MoT, Alloys, power  
steering. Excellent condition, £750.  
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2003, 46,500 miles, silver,  
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## Reanne second win right on cue

DUDLEY'S Reanne Evans has retaining her Eden Resources Masters title at the Crucible Sports Bar, Newbury.

Evans, world champion for the past 10 years, took the £850 first prize when she beat Hong Kong-based world No.2 Ng On Yee 5-1 in the final.

During the two-day event the 30-year-old produced several sizeable breaks including a 104 against Hong Kong's So Man Yan in the qualifying stages, for which she also took the high break prize of £50, and also saw off fellow Dudley player Maria Catalano in the last four.

Evans was pleased with her form and now has her sights set on yet another world title at the Northern Snooker Centre in Leeds in April.

"I played solidly and had quite a lot of 50s, 60s, and 70s as well as a hundred break," she said. "I'm now looking forward to the next couple of events and defending the world championship," she said.

But Evans admitted that she remains frustrated by the lack of backing for the women's game, with a number of tournaments this season already having been cancelled due to a lack of entries.

## Golfer gets reward for hole in one

IT'S time for a hole lot of celebration for a Wall Heath golfer when he scored a hole-in-one during a recent club competition.

John Hartill, age 59, scored his ace with a five-iron on the 165-yard, par-three 17th at Enville GC, and the 13-handicapper was rewarded with membership of the exclusive BOSS Watches H1 Club and a specially-commissioned, commemorative clock.

The company has once again pledged to reward club golfers with an exclusive watch for every hole-in-one recorded during a club competition – and Harthill is among the latest to achieve the feat this year.

No extra registration is required to participate.

# Hales up against tough opposition

**Sandbach 37 Old Halesonians 24**  
HALES travelled to Cheshire for a difficult contest against a fit, open-running Sandbach team and backs that ran everything from everywhere.

Hales took the initial exchanges and put pressure on the home defence. Sandbach came back and forced an early penalty to lead.

After six minutes the home side again took the game forward, their backs causing trouble for Hales defence. They scored a well-worked try converted for a 10-0 lead.

Hales needed to improve, fly-half Ga-

### Rugby

reth Bown took a late hit off the ball and sprained his ankle. He stayed on but this was the start of the team's injuries.

After 16 minutes a scrum close to the Sandbach 22 saw Hales dominant, a break blindsided by scrum half Callum Young fed wing Warren Oliver for a try. The away side were penalised on 23 minutes. Sandbach converted 13 - 5. From the restart Hales were again having to defend. They lost second row Guy Field with knee trouble and

flanker Loz Breese who was concussed in a tackle.

They were replaced by Mark Evans and Tom Jordan respectively. Sandbach took the initiative with a well-worked try, converted for a 20-5 lead at half time.

Evans and Taylor rallied the players and the second half started more positive. The forwards with front row Louis Padian, Pete Fitzgerald and Rich Taylor gave a platform for the backs, Young at scrum half gave excellent service through Bown to the Robinson Brothers Carl and Andy who pressured the opposite backs. A penalty ensued which

full back Chris Hooper converted

On 51 minutes Luke Smith sprinted for the line for a try. Hooper converted.

Pressure again saw three penalties in succession given away by Sandbach. Hooper converted all three.

Hales pressure was maintained up until 10 minutes from time.

Then Sandbach forced a penalty then the home wing took the blind side for a converted try.

Only 5 minutes to go Sandbach kicked through the defence, the chasing wing out-paced the Hales players to score.

# City bids farewell to local hero Sir Jack

**THE West Midlands said a tearful farewell to one of its favourite sons as thousands united for Sir Jack Hayward's funeral.**

Thousands of people lined the streets, with parts of the city centre coming to a standstill to pay tribute to the legendary 91-year-old former Wolves owner, who died last month.

In scenes not witnessed for ered in a heaving Queen Square where the service was relayed on a giant screen. Despite the bitter February weather, the fans silently stayed before breaking into cheers, chants and applause as the coffin was carried from the church.

Hundreds of invited guests packed into St Peter's Church for the funeral, attended by Sir Jack's long-time companion Patti Bloom and his three children Jonathan, Rick and Susan.

Wolves players and managers past and present also attended the service, which fittingly lasted 90 minutes.

Sir Jack's coffin was draped in a Union Flag and had an RAF service uniform placed on top, as well as roses in a floral tribute.

TV presenter Suzi Perry, John Richards, Ron Flowers and Steve Bull were among those paying tribute, as was West Bromwich Albion chairman Jeremy Peace. Jonathan Hayward thanked everyone for attending, including the thousands outside. He and Rick gave readings during an emotional service, while a eulogy came from Sir Jack's friend of 45 years, Baroness Rachael Heyhoe Flint.

The service was 'composed with great thought

decades, a huge crowd gathered in the city centre for the funeral.

and detail' by Sir Jack himself.

It included readings of the poems 'If' by Rudyard Kipling and William Blake's 'The Tyger' read by Led Zeppelin singer Robert Plant.

Hymns chosen by the patriotic millionaire included Jerusalem and O Valiant Hearts.

There was also The Battle Hymn of the Republic (Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!) explained in the order of service as a 'tribute to the USA, to whom Jack owed so much'.

Wolves chief executive Jez Moxey also made an emotional contribution to the service, saying: "We miss you Sir Jack - we love you Jack." Baroness Heyhoe Flint said of her friend: "He was a role model, highly visible, very approachable, honest and caring. A man who never took a penny out of the club.

"We loved him. He was loyal to us. We are so lucky to have shared his life."

As she ended her heartfelt tribute, the congregation broke out into spontaneous applause.



Thousands gathered in Wolverhampton city centre to say farewell to their hero Sir Jack Hayward

## Caution as Brum fixtures released

SPEEDWAY fixtures for Cradley and Birmingham's National League campaign have been released – but with a note of caution.

The Heathens have five away matches where the date has yet to be confirmed – including a Perry Barr derby against the Brummies, pencilled in for Wednesday, August 19. But the draft list was issued anyway.

Cradley fixtures, National League unless stated:  
March: 18, Birmingham (Challenge) A, 25 Birmingham (CH) H.  
April: 8 Coventry H, 22 Eastbourne H.  
May: 13 Middlesbrough H, 24 Eastbourne A, 27 Birmingham H.  
June: 10 Kent H, 21 Middlesbrough A, 24 Reserved H.  
July: 8 Stoke H, 22 Buxton H.  
August: 12 Golden Hammer (Individual) H, 15 Stoke A, 26 King's Lynn H, 29 Rye House A.  
September: 9 Rye House H.

Away fixtures against Coventry, Buxton, Kent, King's Lynn and Birmingham to be confirmed.  
Birmingham fixtures, National League unless stated:  
March: 18 Cradley (Challenge) H, 25 Cradley (CH) A.  
April: 3 Stoke H, 15 Rye House H.

May: 6 King's Lynn H, 20 Eastbourne (Knockout Cup) H, 27 Cradley A, 31 Eastbourne (KOC) A.  
June: 1 Kent A, 3 Buxton H, 17 Coventry H, 27 Stoke A.  
July: 1 Middlesbrough H, 8 King's Lynn A, 15 Kent H, 17 Coventry A, 25 Rye House A.

August: 2 Middlesbrough A, 5 Reserved H, 16 Buxton A, 23 Eastbourne A.  
September: 2 Eastbourne H, 16 Reserved H, 30 Joe Thurlay Memorial H.

Home fixture against Cradley to be confirmed.

## Foster is backing Fletcher

BEN FOSTER has hailed Albion new-boy Darren Fletcher as a "perfect fit" and backed him to raise the Baggies' standards by 10 per cent.

Fletcher is standing by for his debut at Burnley on Sunday after moving on a free transfer from Manchester United on Monday.

And Foster, his former Old Trafford team-mate, says the former Scotland captain will help raise the bar for his new team-mates.

"It's great for the club," said Foster. "He fits perfectly into the ethos of our club."

"We built the foundations we have now on players like that – hard working, good quality, honest, a player you can rely on."

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## Khalsa move to top spot in table

### Sporting Khalsa 3 Cradley Town 0

SPORTING Khalsa moved into top spot in the West Midlands league with a comfortable victory over neighbours Cradley.

All of the damage was done in a first half in which the home side dominated.

The breakthrough came on eight minutes with Craig Bannister who surge forward and finished with aplomb past the onrushing Matt Jones.

The match was effectively sealed as a contest thanks to two quick goals just after the half hour.

First, Robinson – making his home debut at the back for Khalsa – bundled home from a corner before Nicky Campbell slotted home a penalty after Mensah Kinch was felled in the box.

Bladen sounded a warning that Cradley were not completely dead and buried, putting a header over James Pemberton's bar from 12 yards with two minutes to go to the break.

Khalsa were unable to press on in the second half and build on their three goal advantage.

First, Jones produced another excellent save, again to deny Townsend just three minutes after the restart and then Bannister was flagged for offside after converting a Kinch cross.

## Warning to Berahino

ALBION legend Ally Robertson has warned Saido Berahino not to rock the boat – after the club's top scorer admitted he hopes to move “on to bigger things”.

Robertson believes the 21-year-old striker risks incurring the wrath of boss Tony Pulis, after giving an interview in which he claimed fans will give him their blessing to depart if he scores the goals to keep Albion in the Premier League. It is understood Berahino did not have permission from the club to give the interview, the contents of which was widely publicised this week.

And Robertson said: “I think Mr Pulis would want everyone to be giving 100 per cent and not thinking about themselves.

“The position we are in needs that – the last thing we need is someone trying to rock the boat.”

# Fletcher must prove himself again at Baggies

ALBION new-boy Darren Fletcher says he must prove himself all over again after swapping Manchester United's quest for titles for the Baggies' battle against relegation.

Fletcher insists he is ready for the Premier League survival scrap after arriving on Monday in a free-transfer beat-the-deadline deal.

But he admits that his achievements at Old Trafford, which include five Premier League titles and a Champions League winner's medal, count for little now.

“Everything you've done in the past is all

### Football

well and good but you've got to go out and prove yourself in every game and this is a new challenge for me so I am going to have to go and prove myself to the fans,” said the 31-year-old.

“My aim is to progress the club, to get us back up the league, finishing in the top half and things like that.

“I want good cup runs and to play as many games as I can and earn the respect of the fans and hopefully they will enjoy me

as a player in the time I'm here. It is a different challenge but it's one that I'm well aware of.

“I know the position that the club are in right now and I don't want to be down there.

“We want to stay in the league and push up the league.

“I'm more than aware of that, I know what's in store and I'm here to help and to get the team where I think they belong.”

And Fletcher, who was Albion's only deadline-day addition, revealed Baggies boss Tony Pulis played a key role in luring

him to The Hawthorns. I know of West Brom's history and I have been here many times playing but the manager was a big pull,” said Fletcher.

“We had a few conversations and he really sold the club and his ideas to me. “It's great when a manager really wants you and lets that be known and every conversation we had was fantastic,” said Fletcher.

“I have great respect for him and he was someone I really wanted to play for but I knew I was coming to a great club as well,” he added.

## Albion's transfer disaster

ALBION have suffered a double deadline-day disappointment as deals for Carlton Cole and Martin Olsson broke down – but Darren Fletcher signed on a free transfer from Manchester United.

The Baggies had looked poised to announce a high-profile triple swoop for former Scotland captain Fletcher, West Ham striker Cole and Norwich full-back Olsson.

But the Hammers pulled the plug on Cole's move at the 11th hour with the veteran target man waiting at the Albion training ground after agreeing personal terms and passing a medical.

And Olsson's proposed move from Norwich was not completed after late hitches, with Graham Dorrans' move in the opposite direction also called off.

Fletcher was the only deadline-day arrival, leaving boss Tony Pulis inevitably disappointed after making a striker his No.1 priority.

The head coach called off record signing Brown Ideye's proposed move to Al-Gharafa in Qatar after the collapse of the Cole deal happened.

## Lambert turns back on Villa

VILLA'S late move for Rickie Lambert on transfer deadline day failed because the life-long Liverpool fan was unwilling to leave Anfield.

The England frontman was recruited in the summer by Reds boss Brendan Rodgers, but decided the switch to Villa, at a reported £5m was not for him.

The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford. Thursday, February 5

# NEW BOY JAKE GIVES YELTZ WIN

Halesowen 2-1 Stamford

**A last gasp winner from new signing Jake Jones took away the bitter taste of October's meeting with Stamford.**

The Yeltz claimed their 2-1 win at the Zeeko Stadium. Halesowen hadn't won a game since they beat Matlock on January 10, and a win would put them back on track towards the play-offs

Their opponents Stamford looked to continue their winning ways after beating Belper 3-2 on Saturday.

The game started off with the Daniels getting the first decent chance at goal, as Tom McGowan's through ball reached Ryan Robbins whose powerful shot was well held by Matt Sargeant.

Stamford kept up the pressure, as Richard Jones headed the ball across the box to Michael Built, whose looping header bounced off the top of the crossbar.

### Chance

Halesowen's first real chance came on 22 minutes, as Haseley broke past the Daniels' defence and hit a shot which was firstly saved by Andy Stevens but he could only parry the ball back to the Yeltz striker who couldn't find the net as his second shot flew into the side netting.

It was just past the half hour mark where the deadlock was broken, as Haseley passed the ball to Iyseden Christie in the penalty area, and after a defensive error from Stamford, he comfortably placed the ball into the net.

However, the lead was to be short lived after half

### Football

time. A lapse of concentration from the Yeltz allowed Robbins to burst down the left wing and he hit a low cross past the outstretching hand of Sargeant and to Jordan Smith, who was able to easily tap the ball into the net.

After 70 minutes, new signing Jake Jones came on in place of Aaron Griffiths.

Jones turned the game on its head almost instantly, as he skipped past two Stamford defenders before curling the ball past Stevens to only see it just go wide of the right hand post.

The game came into its final minutes, and on 88 minutes, Elliott Turner's powerful effort renounced off the bat and towards Jake Jones, who controlled the ball and he gently lifted it over Andy Stevens and into the net.

Halesowen keep their play-off hopes alive.

**Halesowen:** Sargeant, Green, Griffiths (Jones), Forde, Hull, Tilt, Charlton, Tonks, Christie (Thompson-Brown), Haseley, Bragoli (Turner).

**Subs:** Pearson, Mackenzie.

## Whiley celebrates second open doubles title



Jordanne Whiley with doubles partner Yui Kamiji after winning the Australian Open doubles

BRITAIN'S Jordanne Whiley and Japan's Yui Kamiji claimed their second Australian Open women's doubles wheelchair tennis title and their fifth successive Grand Slam crown on Friday at Melbourne Park after defeating second seeds Jiske Griffioen and Aniek van Koot 4-6, 6-4, 7-5. Meanwhile, fellow Brit Gordon Reid finished runner-up in the men's doubles partnering Argentina's Gustavo Fernandez.

Whiley and Kamiji fought back from 2-0 down in the opening set to draw level with the Dutch pairing, but they couldn't fully retrieve a second break as Griffioen and van Koot took the opener.

However, Whiley and Kamiji broke a sequence of service holds at the end of the second set to take it 6-4 and force a tense decider in which they bounced back from 3-1 down to eventually edge ahead 6-5, before break-

ing the Dutch serve one last time in a tense finale.

Victory in Melbourne came in three hours and 21 minutes and means that Whiley and Kamiji's ambitions to secure a second successive calendar year Grand Slam remain intact as they now focus on Roland Garros in June.

“I'm really delighted to win such a tough match, Jiske and Aniek gave us a great game.

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